

Royal Obedience :

OR

GREAT BASTARD.

Giving an account of the
Birth and Pedigree of *FRANÇOIS le GRAND*,
The First French King of the *House of Bourbon*.

A TRAGICOMEDY.

As it is Acted at the Theatre-François, in the
City of Paris.

Translated into English by *David Vandyke*.

This is a *very dangerous* piece, and *should not* be
acted in any Theatre.

Licensed, and Entered according to Order,

LONDON

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ROYAL CHUCKOLD

GRAND BASTARD

A TRAGEDY COMEDY

LONDON

TO THE

Right Honourable

EDWARD RUSSELL,

Lord High Admiral

OF

ENGLAND,

Under Their Present Majesties

King *William* and Queen *Mary*.

Right Honourable,

PEace being the chief Jewel of the Treasure of
Temporal Happiness, as common Disturbers
ought to be stigmatiz'd with some Signal Dis-
grace and Satyr, so ought the Promoters thereof
to be extoll'd with all Encomiums and Applause
imaginable. Hence it was that those, who among

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Ancient Romans, had done great Things against a Foreign Enemy, for their Country's Good, were on their Return to Rome, convoy'd to the Capitol with all Solemnity, and with great Entertainment, received all the Honour Rome could bestow : Which being deny'd to Julius Cæsar, bred the Civil War 'twixt him and Pompey. Neither was any Attempt among them reputed too hard and desperate, when the Publick Interest lay at Stake. Thus Mutius Scævola, that resolute Roman, having design'd to kill Porfenna King of Hetruria, in his Tent, mistaking one of his Lords for him, burnt his Right Hand that had committed the Mistake, in the Fire, in the King's Presence, with these Words, En quam vile sit Corpus iis qui magnam Gloriam appetunt ! The King being amaz'd at his undaunted Courage, dismiss'd him without Harm, and strait made Peace with the Romans. Epaminondas, that Noble Theban, who overcame the Athenians and Lacedæmonians, by his Conduct and Courage, made Little Contemptible Thebes the Mistress of all Greece. And having, at last, received his Mortal Wound in the Battel at Mantinea,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

tinea, betwixt the Thebans and Lacedæmonians, in the great Joy of his Victory, his Blood and Soul issued out of the same Wound together; whilst it was said of him at his Death, That he left only Two Daughters to continue his Name to Posterity, viz. the Victories of Leuctra and Mantinea.

Worthy Sir, I repute it neither Arrogance nor Flattery to compare the Heroes of past Ages with the Ornaments of the Present, and say, that tho' you should leave no other Memorial to perpetuate your Name, but your late Signal Victory obtained over the Disturber of Christendom, at Sea, it were a sufficient Monument, to immortalize your Memory, more than the Two Daughters of Epaminondas. Thus since, for your Countries Interest, you have, with so good Success against the Common Enemy, appear'd on the World's Stage, every one who reap the Fruits of your Care, Conduct, and Courage, ought to pay Tribute to your Praise, tho' the whole Nation be not able to pay the Interest of your VVarlike Deserts. I, among the rest, throw in my Mite, to strew the way to your indebted Capitol, presuming that you, who have been Victorious over
Mon-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Monſieur at Sea, do not fear to ſecond a Quarrel
againſt him on Land, Thus, relying on your in-
nate Goodneſs, Candor, and Clemency, begging your
Acceptance, and Pardon for my Boldneſs, I hearti-
ly acknowledge my ſelf

Your Honour's moſt Humble,

and moſt Obedient Servant,

P. V.

PROLOGUE.

Plays are the Pictures of the former Times,
Which represent both Vertue, Vice, and Crimes:

They are the Breath of History; for they
Restore to Life what's ready to decay:

True Emblems of Contempt, Love, and Disdain,
Which famous Acts do bring to life again.

This present Play doth set before your eye
Th' eclipsed Map of Royal Majesty;

A Dark Eclipse, that all the World confounds,
And Europe stains with cruel Blood and Wounds:

It bred a Bakhsh, whose killing Eyes

Doth tann the Earth, and spot the very Skies.

Religion is his Bane, Bloodshed his Love,
Abhors all Mankind, slights the Powers above.

The Widows Tears, and bleeding Orphans Cries,
Ascend to Heaven against his Villanies.

When he was pro'd a base born, and was put by,

The Throne, the Crown, and all his Royalty;

His Hereticks (for so he terms them now)

Oppos'd his Foes gave him the Kingdom too:

But he, with Mah'met soon a League did make,

And then devour'd them for Religion's sake.

What Monster of Ingratitude was he,

That did requite them thus for Loyalty!

But let him Reign; the lofty Cedar falls,

And so must he, with other Cannibals.

Dra-

Dramatis Personæ.

Clodius Capo, *King of France.*

Orlinus, *Brother to Capo, and Apparent Heir to the Crown.*

Pontæus, *Cardinal of Richlieu, and Chief Minister of State in France.*

Arnusius, *a Noble-Man of France, and Favourite of Orlinus.*

Pedro Marcellus, *Father Confessor to the Queen.*

Meander, *a young Spark of Honour, and Gentleman-Usher to the Queen.*

Hixius Doxius, *a pretended Physician come from Padua.*

The W O M E N.

Stratonice, *Queen to King Capo.*

Licofta, *Pontæus's Niece, the Queen's Bosom Friend, and great Favourite.*

Pandora, *An old decay'd Lady, Sister to Pontæus, in love with Meander.*

Messenger, Waiting-Maid, Midwife, Child, Ghost, Jesuits, Monks, Priars, Executioners, Guards, and Attendants.

THE
 Royal Cuckold :
 OR, THE
 GREAT BASTARD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Licofta, folo.

Licoft.

AM I defcended of fuch *Pedegree*?
 So great, fo fair, and yet from Suitors free?
 What fpiteful *Planet* did eclipse the Light,
 Or what prodigious *Comet* rul'd that Night,
 When I was born? Did *Via Lactea* run
 With bitter Wormwood, to o'erflow the Sun?
 No Female Star did usher in that Morn,
 To influence my Fate, when I was born:
 It rather feems that *Leo*, void of Care,
 About the Northern *Pole*, did whip the Bear.

Enter Pandora.

Pand. What's the matter? You're never well-pleas'd:
 You're fick of the Simples: You want a handful *You-know-not-what*,
 to cure you I know not when.

B

Licoft.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Licof. I'm troubl'd, and you augment my Grief.

Pand. And what's your great Trouble, *Madam*?

Licof. That which you cannot help.

Pand. And why so? Are you in a Love-Fever?

Perhaps the weight of your Maidenhead may trouble you?

Licof. I do not say so; but I have liv'd till I am Seventeen Years of Age, and cannot yet have a Husband.

Pand. Oh, is that your Grief? A pain in the Mind! I thought so; but hadn't you been so proud and saucy, you might have been eas'd of your Burden before now; but I my self was not married till I was full One and twenty.

Licof. Shall I believe it? Did you live a Maid till One and twenty? O Monster of Lyes! I wonder that you are not asham'd: Persuade me to it, if you can. I shall rather believe that you lost your Maidenhead at Eleven — But pray, *Madam*, be ingenuous, and tell me — Was you married a Maid at One and twenty? O horrible! a Maid at One and twenty! that's within two degrees of a *Thornback*.

Pand. I will not tell you; you may find it out: You are too bold to ask me such Questions. I do not put upon you; nor do I say that you must live a Maid so long. And, if I lost my Maidenhead before I took Matrimony, I had Wit enough to conceal the Loss, and behave my self cunningly towards my Husband, when first I enter'd Wedlock, which perhaps you have not.

Licof. Scold on; I thought you were a Physician.
A Doctrix for the Devil;

And all your Receipts bitter as Gall.

Pand. I tell thee, *Licof*, If thou wert wise and courteous, as thou art fair and handsome, thou might'st deserve the best Nobleman in *France*. But since thy Wit is destitute of Discretion; thou may'st live Seventeen Years longer unmarried; and as for me, I will never bespeak a Husband for thee.

Licof. And what do I care? I will bespeak one for my self.

Pand. I will not keep you company longer.

[*Exit Pandora in a passion.*]

Licof. Get you gone, get you gone, imperious old Hagg; walks frowning in a passion, calls me saucy, yet I dare not tell her her own,

own, for giving offence to my Uncle and the Queen — Oh to be thus confin'd, I could tear my Hair.

Enter Orlinus.

Orlin. Your Servant, *Madam*.
Your Eyes have an attractive Virtue.

I could not see and admire you, without coming at you.

Licof. Royal Sir, I humbly thank you ; for a Jeer from your mouth is legitimate to a Complement, and metamorphos'd from a Complement to a real Truth. I am admirable, indeed, but for a dull Soul and Homeliness.

Orlin. No, no, worthy *Madam* : I admire you for the external visible Perfections and Beauty of your handsome Body, and internal invisible Faculties and Accomplishments of so noble a Soul.

Licof. Thank you, *Royal Sir* ; but I do not merit so great Applause.

Orlin. *Madam*, believe me, I have long, tho' impatiently, waited for an opportunity to present you with my hearty and passionate Respects ; and give vent to that irresistible Fire, which hath hitherto been smother'd within my scorched Breast. And to speak without Dissimulation, from the first period of time I fixed mine Eyes on your conquering Face (where all the Stars both of Beauty and Vertue meet, and make up a Constellation of Perfections) I have still carried your lovely *Idea* in my Bosom ; for, like *Achilles's* Spear, nothing can cure my Malady, but the Sovereign Eyes which at first gave me the Wound.

Licof. I humbly than your *Royal Highness* for your loving Address ; but cannot persuade my self, that a Star of the first magnitude will so much eclipse himself, as to stoop to, or court a *Meteor* of so low a *Sphere*.

Orlin. The full Orb of your Endowments, can darken all the Celestial Luminaries ; and influenceth me more with the ardent Rays of your Beauty, than all the Planets beside : Fair *Helena* to you was but a *Gypsie*, *Lucretia* but a *Courtezan*, *Penelope* but a *Changling*, *Minerva* but a *Fool* : And what Prince, tho' never so puissant, can but admire and adore that Lady, wherein all Perfections are so centered ?

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Licost. Royal Sir, you are the Apparent Heir to the *French Crown*, and therefore there must be great Disparity between your Grandeur and my Meannels: And as for these Airy Complements, they are fitter to perswade a Miss, than court an honest Mistress; and you had gain'd more Ground on my Affection, had you plainly said, you lov'd me.

Orlin. Love ye? I do by all that's good.

He that hath seen you, and doth not love you, is not Master of his own Humanity.

And, as for me, my Love is turn'd to *Admiration*, my *Admiration* to *Adoration*; and if ever I was guilty of *Idolatry* it is now.

Enter Stratonice in Grandeur.

Strat. What's here to be seen? —

What Heavenly Powers do Influence us now?

Uniting the two greatest Glories of the *French Court* within so close a Circle.

Orlin. Great *Madam*, I am enchanted within the Circles of Love, by the charming Spangles of this incomparable Beauty, the *Phoenix* of Women, and *Wonder* of Men: Yet grudge not my Destiny, for I am in love with my Chains, and glory in my own Confinement.

Strat. Brother, *Cupid* hath been more than ordinary kind, in directing his Arrows so much for your advantage. And if you be as loving to make her your Wife, as I am willing to embrace her my Sister, you will speedily prosecute your Pretence; and (if the Lady give consent) make us all three happy at once.

Licost. *Madam*, his Royal Fancy is but on the Ramble, and intends to have a little Pastime on me in his *Transit*. However I take all well, since from a Person so far above me, and so near related to my Royal Mistress.

Orlin. By my Interest of *France*, by my Honour, and all the Privileges of Royalty, you are the Idol of mine Eyes, the Delight of my Soul, and the Object of my Affection. [Exit Orlinus.]

Strat. Thank your Stars, Lady, *Cupid* has emptied a whole Quiver in your Cause, and made the Lustiest Cedar in *France* stoop to your

your Beauty. — The Prince is passionately in love with you; but you should not be so diffident, when you see him so deeply engaged.

Licof. His Love is more a Flash than a Flame.

'Tis destitute of all solid Substance.

Neither has he spoke any thing of Marriage,
But striven to blow me up with a belief of Incredibles, by his vain and airy Complements.

Strat. It is below the Candour, Greatness and Royalty of so Noble a Prince, to be a Hypocrite or Formalist in Love, to so worthy and deserving a Lady.

Enter Pontæus.

Strat. See how the Fates favour us.

Welcome, dearest Friend:

You have prevented my sending for you.

Pont. I am glad I have sav'd you the Trouble, *Great Madam*, and (as I'm bound in Duty) I am ready at all times, and on all Occasions to serve your Majesty.

Strat. My Brother *Orlinus's* Love to your Niece, which has long been kept secret, in his scorched Breast, is now broke out in a Burning Mountain, and if he meet not quickly with the sure Remedy of Matrimony, to quench his prevailing Flames, he will be ready to sink in the Sea of Despair, therefore was desirous to consult with you, how to bring things to a right Period, with all possible speed: For a lingring Love is commonly dissolv'd in Air, and at last turneth to nothing.

Pont. I humbly thank you, *Great Madam*, for your Kindness towards my Niece. It is by the sweet Influence of your Celestial Aspect, that she maketh such a Figure at Court: For till she enjoyed the Beams of your undeserved Favour; she could not presume to entertain a thought of being the Queen's Sister-in-Law, by marrying to the Apparent Heir of the *French Crown*.

Licof. I have sufficient Cause to suspect the *Great Monsieur's* Amorous Pretences; for they are too much airy to prove a Solid, Well-grounded, Settled, and Durable Love. Neither hath he seriously propos'd to me any thing of Marriage, but only striven

to enveigle my Ears with passionate Proteſtations of an impatient Love.

Strat. My Brother is a Perſon of ſo great Honour, innate Candour, and ſo many Years Experience, that he ſcorneth to make ſo publick and ſo ſerious a Suit to a young Lady, and not be really in earneſt.

Pont. Rallery and Amuſement are ſo notorious a Prejudice to the ſacred Reputation of a Virgin Lady, that a Perſon of ſo great a Spirit, Valour, and Royalty, cannot be guilty of ſo notorious and ſhameful a Crime.

Strat. My Brother hath ſufficiently diſplay'd his Reſpects for ſo deſerving a Lady: But being a Prince of the Royal Blood, peradventure, maketh a ſtop in his Proceedings, expecting that you, in Paternal Care, will make a tender of your Niece, in Marriage to him. And, conſidering the high Extract of his Birth, it is nothing below your Eminence to be the firſt Aggreſſor.

Pont. It may be ſo, *Madam*; and to find a favourable Opportunity, I will make a ſplendid Ball at my own Houſe, to which I will invite your Majeſties, the Royal *Monsieur*, with all the Nobility at Court, and in the miſt of the Entertainment, lay hold on ſome convenient Minute to make the propoſed Tender under my own Roof: And this will I perform with all ſpeed.

Strat. We ſhall quickly then know the reſult of our Deſigns, and I wiſh all may turn to the right Center.

Licoſt. The *Monsieur's* Love is but an incenſed Vapour, it will quickly conſume, and be extinguiſh'd to nothing.

Strat. Are you wiſer than your Uncle, and all who are acquainted with the Matter? There is none of your Opinion but your ſelf.

Enter Clodius Capo, groaning, coughing, and ſpitting, with a Doctor of Phyſick.

Licoſt. Who comes here?

Strat. It is the King.

How now dear Husband? I am glad to ſee you ſtrong again.

Clod. I am far from ſtrong; but by good chance, have met with a *Paduan Doctor*, who is like to do us both a Kindneſs, and

and make me as able for Generation as you are for Conception.

Strat. And is this Gentleman the Doctor?

Dox. Yes, Great *Madam*, I am the Man.

Strat. You can never make my Husband capable to get me with Child, he is an Eunuch from his Mothers Womb; all your Art cannot correct his Defects of Nature. I am well satisfied with my Condition: but all the loss is in the want of an Heir to the *French Crown*, which in reason cannot be expected from the Veins of the unhappy *Stratonice*.

Dox. I have done as much in my time as all this comes to: and I earnestly request your *Majesty*, not to question my Ability; for I am no vain Pretender, neither do I profess more than I can perform. Three Parts of the World know me, and wonder at my Miraculous Cures. *Fando*, Duke of *Trebuny*, having seven Daughters and no Son, was loath to leave his Estate to one of the Female Sex, and therefore had concluded to make his Brother's Son Heir. But I, to ingratiate my self in the Duke's Favour, took the eldest Daughter aside, into a private Room, before her Father rose; where, by a secret Art, which none knoweth but my self, I metamorphos'd her from a Woman to a Man, sufficiently able for Generation.

Strat. How do you know that he was able?

Dox. I perswaded his Mother to put him to Bed with one of her Waiting Maids, to give proof of his Ability; and he was so active, that he begot Eight Children in one Night, and had not his Foot slip, he had made them up half a Score.

Strat. You are a fine Man indeed, if this be not a *Paradox* in Nature and absolutely incredible; yet I'm glad my Husband met with you: for he who can turn a Woman to a Man, can undoubtedly mend one Defect in him who is a Man already.

Dox. Never question my Skill, *Madam*; for there is no part of the Body of Man, but I have made. The Duke of *Arkos* had but one Son, and that a Fool, without Brains; but I, by squirting a wonderful Coddle through his Ear into his empty Skull, made him a wise Man, and a State Politician. Therefore, being conscious to my own Skill, and sure to perform what I promise, I desire to make a positive Bargain before I go about a Cure of so great Consequence.

Strat.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Strat. And what must you have then for this great Cure?

Dox. Fifty thousand Crowns; the one half in hand, and the other when the Cure is accomplish'd.

Clod. I will rather continue as I am; for Fifty thousand Crowns is more Money than I shall willingly bestow.

Strat. Do not grudge it, Husband; an Heir to the *French Crown* cannot be bought too dear.

Clod. Well, well, *Stratonice*, thy Will shall be a Law. Doctor, you shall have your Desire, so soon as the Cure is perfected.

Dox. But it is necessary that I have Twenty thousand Crowns before I begin the Cure; for my Medicines are composed of very costly Ingredients, which come from *Egypt*, *Arabia*, and other remote places.

Clod. Come along then, Doctor, and you shall have your Money.

[*Exeunt Clodius, Doxius, and Guards.*]

Strat. I shall be glad if this honest Doctor perform what he promiseth.

Licost. The performance of his Promise will be a Miracle; but if he do as he says, he will gain your Affection for ever, and conferr an universal Favour on the whole Kingdom of *France*.

Strat. I will go now and give him Ten thousand Crowns, which my Husband shall not know of, to encourage him to do his Work well, and with all possible speed; for my Expectation is become impatient, and my Appetite is set a-lónging. [Exit *Stratonice*.]

Enter Pandora, in a gaudy Dress, convoyed by Meander.

Pand. What? still musing on a Husband!

Licost. What's here now? *December* and *June*? Hot and Cold are united. Sure we shall shortly see some new Constellation of Meteors, since the *Torrid* and *Frozen Zones* are come together.

Pand. I am neither Cold, nor *December*; but a good active Gentlewoman, not inferior to any young Lady at Court.

Licost. But prithee, Aunt, where hast thou pick'd up this young Spark? He is fitter for my Converse than thine.

Pand. Why are you so desirous to know?

Perhaps you design to cheat me of him.

I have done him a Kindness with my Brother the Cardinal, and he is resolv'd to do me another.

Licost.

Licost. What Kindness is it? prithee tell me.

Pand. He resolves to be my Husband.

Licost. O brave Aunt! live a Widow forty Years, and now long for a Husband at Fourscore and Ten!

What Fool will believe you! Not the young Gentleman, I'm sure.

Pand. What's the matter, Confidence?

What if I have a Colt's-Tooth in my Head still?

But did you ever see any Wantonness by me? [*Threatens to beat her with her Staff.*]

Licost. That's long of your gray Hairs, wrinkled Face, and stinking Breath.

Pand. Did you ever hear such an impudent lying Girl!

You, Monsieur Meander, am not I a very handsome Woman?

Meand. You are, Madam, a very handsome Lady in my Eyes.

Pand. Ay, and in every bodies else—O thou tempting young Boldness!

I have been admir'd all my life time for a Beauty, and now am set at nought by my own prodigal Neice. You little Husky, this is enough to set my intended Husband and me at variance, and cause him alter his Mind, if he were not of a more hoble and stedfast Resolution.

Licost. I dare pass my Word he will not alter his Resolution; for he never resolv'd to marry you; no, nor never will.

Meand. Madam, do you think that I pretend to more than what I really intend to perform.

Licost. Pray, Sir, satisfie my Aunr, and have done: I will not spoil your Design; but there has not been a Bride in France of Four-score and ten these hundred Years till now.

Pand. You lye too, Husky, I am but Fourscore and nine.

Licost. I have reason to believe you, for you have told me so these six years past.

Pand. Whatever be my Age, I shall make as good a Bed-fellow as if I were but Sixteen—And have a little Money too.

[*Takes a handful of Gold, puts it in Meander's Pocket, and kisseth him.*]

Dear Love, does my Breath stink?

Meand. No, my Love, 'tis as sweet as a Rose.

C

Licost.

Licost. Ay, ay, 'tis perfum'd with Gold: Gold makes all things glister, and makes a good Scent where there has been a noisome Smell. It cures the Cracks of decrepit Age; but the Breach soon breaketh out again, and must be made up anew.

Pand. O thou spiteful Little Slut, that hast no more respect for thine own Aunt, and so vertuous a Lady as I have been, and so kind to you, Hussy ——— O if You could be bought for Money!

Licost. I'll put you in a fair way to be young again.

Pand. So you say; but 'tis more than you can do.

Licost. There is a Doctor lately arriv'd here from *Padua*, who is the Wonder of the World for Experiments in Physick, and restoring decay'd Nature; and is now about a hard piece of Work for the King.

Pand. Prithee, what work is it?

Licost. He is to make him capable of Generation.

Pand. I wish he may for the poor Queen's sake.

Licost. Were the Doctor here, he could tell you whether he could make you young again.

Pand. I would give him a thousand Pistols to make me a Maid again.

Licost. O wonderful! a Maid again! a Maid of Fourscore and ten, that has had seven Husbands in her time! O Paradox in Nature! Come, come, you must leave off your youthful Thoughts now, and think on your Grave and the World to come; and resign all your Interest of this young Spark to me.

Pand. To you! to you! not for all the Gold in *France*; I rather the Devil had you.

Monfieur Meander, am not I as pretty a Woman as she?

Meand. You are both pretty Women; but I am obliged to love you most.

Pand. Then love me as I deserve.

Licost. Yes, yes, he'll love you so long as you can fill his Pockets with Gold.

Pand. Your little Hussy, Love cannot be bought.

He loves me freely with a pure passionate Love, and was never oblig'd to me for one Sous.

Licost. O thou old lying Sinner! speak no more.

Enter

Enter Dr. Hixius Doxius.

But who comes now? Speak of the Devil and he appears.
Welcome, Doctor; I have got you a new Customer.

Dox. I want a little more Money of the Queen.

Licof. That's none of my Business.

But this old Gentlewoman intends to be married to a young Man; and will give you a thousand Pistols to make her a Maid again?

Dox. That's no hard matter, Madam.

Pand. Did you ever restore a lost Maidenhead?

Dox. Yes, a great many.

Pand. What wonderful Cures have you done? What Decays of Nature have you ever restored? If I find you ingenious, I will set you to work, and nobly satisfy you for some profitable Experiments of your admirable Skill.

Dox. The Grand Signior promised, by Proclamation, Ten thousand pounds to any Person that would bring in, dead or alive, *Bassá Fatanti*, the seditious Usurper of *Grand-Cairo*; and I being intimately acquainted with him, and he knowing my wonderful Skill in Physick and Chirurgery, trusted me with his Head to the *Ottoman* Court, where on sight I receiv'd the Money: And having begg'd the Head from the *Grand-Signior* again, I brought it back to *Grand-Cairo*, and set it again on the *Bassá's* Neck; so that he was as sound as formerly. I cut his Cataract of Conspiracy, and with a Plaister of Privacy, I cur'd him of all Treason and Infamy, made him a Loyal Subject, carried him back to the *Grand Signior*, who (wondering at my unparallel'd Skill) pardon'd him all his Crimes, received him into favour, and gave me Ten thousand pounds more for my Trouble.

The Pope's eldest Son was so deaf, that he could not hear a Cannon shot within six foot of his Ear; but I bored his Head with a golden Wiar, in at one Ear, and out at the other; and restor'd his Hearing so well, that from the *Capitol* of *Rome*, he could hear what *Psalm* was Sung in *St. Mary's Church* in *Vienna*.

With a *Radamanthean Water*, of my own composing, I restor'd the Duke of *Londora's* Daughter's Maidenhead, after she had brought forth three Bastards at one Birth.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Pand. O for such a Doctor, he is worth a whole Stage full of Mountebanks. O, to be young again; then I shall cut a Caper half an hour high. *[She jumpeth on her Staff.]*

Meand. And was the Cheat never discovered, Doctor?

Pand. And why a Cheat? an Artificial is as good as any other Maidenhead.

Dox. Her Husband took her to be a very good Maid, and never questioned his Wife's Virginitie: But this my Skill is become common in that Country; so that it is hard to distinguish betwixt a Maid and a married Woman.

Licof. Prithee, Doctor, tell me what is a Maidenhead, that People talk so much of?

Dox. A Maidenhead is a Trifle of Treasure.

A Sieged Fort, a Minute's Pleasure,

A Hug, a Smile, a Blush, a Kiss,

A fond imaginary Bliss,

Love's Passion blown up to a Fire,

Both quench'd and flaming in desire.

And this is all that Mortals prize,

And Princes so Idolatrise.

Meand. Come, come, my Love, if a Maidenhead be a Trifle of so small Moment, we shall do well enough without it.

Pand. What you please my Dear. *[Exeunt Meander and Pandora.]*

Licof. Now Doctor I have a Secret to impart to you, and you must keep it as close as your own Capital Crimes.

Dox. I will be as secret as Silence it self.

Licof. I expect shortly to be married to *Orlinas*, the King's Brother. Now, if by your Means his Majesty should have a Son, no Child of mine can expect to succeed to the Crown. Now, if by your Art you can give satisfaction, without Generation, you will greatly oblige me, and I will not prove unthankful.

Dox. Madam, give me but some small Gratuiry, and I will oblige my self to do what you desire.

Licof. That I will, Doctor.

[Gives him a handful of Gold.]

Dox. Now, Madam, if you will promise to keep my Secret, as I have yours, I shall tell you my Mind freely.

Licof. I will keep your Council as close as my Maidenhead, and perhaps a little longer too.

Dox.

Dox. There is no hope of Generation; for Art can never supply the Defects of such natural Impotence.

Licost. I am glad it is so; all is well. Now we are both bound to keep one another's Secrets: But you are a cunning Man for Money. [Exeunt.]

A C T II.

The Scene Pontzus's Palace.

Enter Pontzus and Pedro Marcellus.

Pont. NOW honest Bosom Friend, *Pedro*, I am near the Pinnacle of Promotion; For my Niece is shortly to be married to *Orlinus*. And I shall be the only Grandee in *France*. I have already conquered three Parts of the Tripple Crown, And would not give two *Bishops* to secure me the fourth.

Pedr. *Orlinus* is a reserv'd and very hallow Man, if I dare say so; And one whose Pretences and Intentions seldom agree. You can hardly feel the motion of his Pulse Polirick, Tho' you be the most famous States-man in *Europe*. As for the Tripple Crown and Popedom, There are so many Cardinals at *Rome*, in chafe of it, that you can never, in reason, expect to attain the Dignity, unless you shake off the Trouble of State Affairs in *France*, remove to the Court of *Rome*, and cast behind your back, the care of a good Conscience.

Pont. Conscience shall not stumble me In the attainment of so great Honour. But as for the *Great Monsieur*, I have felt his Pulse, and he's in a Quotidian Ague of Love. I shall by and by know the result, tho' at a distance; For I have invited the Court to my House.

And

And now is the time of their coming.
Here they are, — stand off.

Enter Clo dius, Stratonice, Orlinus, Licofia, Meander, Pandora,
Dr. Hixius, &c. — with Guards and Attendants.

Clo d. I am as good as my word, Cardinal.
I'm resolv'd now to be merry with you.

Pont. Your Majesty is more than heartily welcome.

My Royal Master under my Roof!

This is a Favour beyond my Merit.

But thus to enjoy a Visit from the whole Royal Family and Court-
Worthies at once, will give me occasion henceforth to boast of my
good Fortune, and the Royal Honour conferred upon me.

Strat. Come, come, Cardinal, forbear your Church-Complements.
The King and I must have one merry Jigg.

Come, Husband, I'll warm your Blood with one brisk Dance:

And that's good for your Cough.

Clo d. Prithee let me alone, I have not danced these twenty Years.

Neither am I now in a dancing mind.

Strat. Be not so backward, we came to be merry.

What a dull Visit is it where there is no Cheerfulness?

Better we had stay'd at home at some mean Recreation.

What say you, Cardinal?

Pont. I am of your mind, Madam.

And will rather take one turn, in my Pontificals, with honest Pe-

dro here, than murder our meeting for want of a little Mirth.

Strat. You may freely do it, for Pope Hildebrand used to dance

like a Ghost, in a White Shirt and Surplice, to animate his Cardi-

nals; and raise their drooping Spirits above the Sphere of a dull

Melancholy: And I think so may a Cardinal serve his King.

Pont. Madam, your Argument is very strong.

And Pedro and I will try what we can do.

Strat. Bravely done.

[The Musick plays, Pontons, and Pedro dance in their Pontificals.]

'Tis a pity you should ever have been Church men.

Pont. And why so, Madam?

Church men may be as free as others;

Yea more; for His Holiness dispenseth with their Venial Faults; wink-

eth at their Errors; and before-hand pardoneth all their deadly Sins. I have a Pardon from the present *Pope Alexander*, for all Sins past, present, and to come: But it cost me more than 'tis worth.

Pedro. Their Holinesses, *Pope Alexander* the Sixth, and *Pope Paul* the Third lay with their own Daughters, and begot Children with their Grandchildren. *St. Alanus de rupe* was as intimate with the *Virgin Mary*, as ever were Man and Wife. — Such small Faults will never break Squares.

Strat. I am afraid it has not been the *B. Virgin*, but some circumventing Devil in her Shape.

Pedro, *Madam*, you must believe as the Church doth, Else you cannot be saved. The holy Story of *St. Alanus's* Conflict with the *B. Virgin* is Hieroglyphically painted on our Lady's Chappel at *Loretto*.

Strat. We have Divinity enough for one Church-dance.

Orlin. But, *Madam*, we are all ambitious to see your Majesty's Royal Motion.

Strat. Come, let us tout then, four in one Courant.

But what young Gentleman is this? [Pointing at Meander.

Licost. That is my Aunts intended Husband, *Madam*.

Strat. Husband! Husband! rather her Great Grand-child.

But why do you mock your Aunt?

She is a Woman past the desire of a Husband.

Licost. She will tell you otherwise, *Madam*.

Pand. What am I past, *Madam*?

I am made of Flesh and Blood as well as other Women.

I am not so old but that I may out-live him.

Strat. If it be so, and Parties be agreed,

You shall have my Consent; and Assistance too.

But your young Spark, can you love this old Gentlewoman?

Meand. I love her very well, *Madam*.

Licost. Yes, yes, but you love her Gold better.

Pand. Hold your Peace; Huffy, I deserve to be married as much as any Lady in France.

Strat. I do not approve of the Match, but now let us be merry.

You young old Gentlewoman may take one turn with your Spark?

Pand. Yes, *Madam*, but if it were another, I would hardly trust her.

Strat. I am much beholden to your good Nature, old *Grannum*.

Pand.

Pand. I am neither old, nor Grannum.

Strat. But, Brother, Why do you stand; You and *Licoffa* must make up the number. [To Orlinus.

Orl. I'll do any thing rather than spoil good Company.

[Stratonice danceth with Meander,
Orlinus with Licoffa.

Strat. I have done Husband, you and I will pass one Visit more and then be gone.

Clod. As soon as you will; for my Patience is worn out.

Strat. But, Doctor, how goes on your Business? are you like to accomplish your Cure?

Hix. Yes, Madam, and that very speedily, You see the King looks with a more cheerful Countenance than formerly.

Strat. Well, *Doctor*, if you do, you will gain great Credit to your self, and infinitely oblige me.

Hix. I do not question it at all, Madam.

Strat. Now, *Licoffa*, it will see what fine Kickshaws thou hast got in thy Uncle's House; for I have danced my self to an Appetite. Come, let us go. [Exeunt, Clodius, Stratonice,
Meander, Licoffa, Pandora,
and the Guard.

Orlin. This airy Divertisement is over, Cardinal. Can you treat your Guests with no greater Entertainment?

Pont. I must acknowledge that your Highness's generous Smiles and Inclinations to what is so near to me, Both in Relation and Protection, as my Niece, loadeth me with so vast a Sum of Obligations, that I am not able to pay the Interest of what is due: Yet in discharge of Part, I do heartily resign to your Royal Pleasure both my self and her. And in further Gratification of your honourable Proposals, by Virtue of my Authority over her (to which she must acquiesce) I humbly tender her to your Highness in Marriage, trusting her Vertuous Disposition, joynd with the full Orb of your Worth and Royalty, will make up a compleat Luminary in our Gallick Sphere.

Orlin. Marriage! Thou proud ambitious Priest:

How dar'st thou be so bold! [Giveth him a Box on the Ear
with great Indignation.

Your Niece and you might have come to a right Understanding,
Without reading so hard a Lecture as Marriage;
And Honour enough too done your Reverend Church-Blood,
For all your big Looks. [Exit Orlinus with his Attendants.

Pedro. This is your worthy Orlinus, I told you what a Spark he was.

Take this blow, to Seal the truth of that Character I gave you of him.

Pont. My Soul is full of Fury, and I'll be
Revenge'd on such a little Pimp as he.

His Crime is Sacrilege——

He has rob'd a Virgin Lady of her Reputation,
And given an impardonable Affront to the *Roman Church* :
I'll send to *Rome* and have him condemn'd before he die,
That the Devil may have his Right without Lett, or Controversie.

Pedro. That's but little ; bend your Wits to a greater Revenge.
Find out some way to frustrate his Expectation of the Crown.

By that means you make him sensible of his Error,
And kneel before you Nieces Feet.

Pont. Well, well, I'll think on't.
By all that's good I'll be revenge'd.

This Blot has cancell'd all his Right to the Crown of *France*.

I have a Contrivance in my Head that will accomplish my Fury.
My Revenge is hatch'd already, and he shall feel the Vengeance of
my implacable Indignation.

Pedro. What is the Contrivance ?

Pont. The only way to be revenge'd, and put him by the Crown
is by begetting the Queen with Child.

Pedro. That's a harder way than *Hannibal* had over the *Alps*.
For we have loaded her Conscience with so much Practice of Piety,
That we our selves have broke the Neck of our own Designs.

Pont. I'll transform my self to an Angel of Light,
And play the Devil in the Shape of a Saint ?
I have out-witted all the Kings of Christendom ;
And doubt not to deal with such a *Shallow brains* as him.

Enter Glodius Capo, Stratonicè, Licofta, with Guards and Attendants.

Clod. Now Cardinal I am come only to bid good Night.

Strat. But where's my Brother ?

Pont. He's gone, Madam.

But he has pay'd his Reckoning.

Strat. Why, what's the matter ?

Pedro. He hath box'd the Cardinal to some purpose.

Strat. Box'd the Cardinal ! was he mad ?

VVhat was the Quarrel ?

Pont. For tendering to him what in the VVorld I love best ;
And what he, a disguised Hypocrite, has courted these several Years,
But seems had no thoughts of Marriage ,
But of some base and impious Design,
To satisfy his Carnal Apperite,
VVithout going to Church ;
And tells, That it had been honourable for you, Niece,
To have given him a little Divertisement at his spare Hours,
VVithout any Priest-Ceremony.

But this I must needs take very kindly, considering what good Service I have done both to King and Kingdom.
I expected a Reward of another Nature.

Clod. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say :
A Blow ! a Blow ! O thrice ungrateful VVretch !
He shall forfeit my Favour, and feel the brunt of my Passion.
'Tis a great Provocation that thus incenseth me.

Licofst. Monster of Men ! have I been courted thus ?
All this while, only to be made a VVhore ?
The Traitor, Villain, Devil, and Cannibal,
Reserv'd me a Toy to play with all.
The Great *Orlinus* did design that I,
Poor and contemptible, should be made high,
By his most gracious condescending Favour,
Decreeing me a lewd Divertisement
For his spare hours : But despicable I,
Suspected still his Love was but a Lye.
But all the Affront and Stain I have receiv'd

Doth not so much torment my Mind and Soul,
As that my dear and reverend Uncle (whom
The greatest Kings respect) should thus be beat
On my account. I'm weary of my Life;
I rather die than be *Orlinus's* Wife.

But 'pray, great *Sir* and *Madam*, pardon me,
If I encroach upon your Royalty.

I'm mad to think that he who did adore
Me by his Words, design'd me for a Whore!

Pont. Forbear, Neice, you're too much in a passion;
Know in what Company you are.

Their Majesties have never found a Blemish in me,
Nor never shall, for all this great Affront;

Yea, the greatest that ever Man receiv'd,
Which my Royal Master doth undoubtedly know.

Clod. An Affront! 'Tis beyond an Affront.

Strat. I'll never own him for a Brother more.

O inhumane Brute! to beat the Reverend and Wise Church-States-
Man, to whom we and all our Subjects owe our Peace; for rendering
that to him in Marriage, which in the World he loves best, after he
had courted her so long, with so great Passion, and pretended Con-
stancy. Had the Reverend Prelate been an impious Wretch, like
himself, and proffer'd him his Neice, not as a Wife, but a Prostitute,
they might have parted good Friends. O Beast! wicked Man!
Brother? Brother to Brutes, and not to Men.

Licost. What Shame and sad Confusion is ordain'd

For poor, dejected, miserable me!

Had he at first the bare fac'd Villain play'd,

At first spoke out his lewd lascivious Suit,

I could have met him with a furious Look,

And struck defiance in his hardned Face;

And made the echoing World a Witness

Of Indignation and Innocence.

But, oh! the base, unprincely, poor Impostor

Has worn the Vizor, and betrayed me;

Deduc'd my Ear with that perfidious Sound

He term'd pure Love; not once, but o'er and o'er.

Now what will babbling Fame proclaim of me,

That loath'd no sooner his lascivious Suit ?
 And thus my Virgin-Innocence must stand
 The blast of each polluting cruel Tongue.
 My Honour now to Infamy must canker,
 When common Story, and each laughing Varlet,
 Will jest on my Contempt, feast on my Shame,
 Smother his Vice, and my Disgrace proclaim.

Stras. Forbear, my dear *Licofa*, no Mistakes,
 Or vulgar Errours shall thy Vertue stain ;
 Your Uncle's Conduct, joyn'd with yours and mine,
 Shall soon remove all Shadows of so mean
 An Imputation ; and the World convince
 Of thy unblemish'd Candour ; and no danger
 Of Slander, or Reproach, shall threaten thee.

Licofa. Suppose the World do me the right to clear
 My Innocence and Vertue from all scandal,
 And, in their Justice, give me but my due,
 And publish me but *Shallow bubbled Fool*,
 That could an insolent, proud, vain Impostor
 Hear so long, buzzing, without interrupting,
 So loud, so often, without Wit or Sense,
 To understand his impious Designs.
 If I escape this Calumny, what then ?
 Surmounting Waves, the Billows pull me down,
 Whilst Inundations of immortal Shame
 Me overwhelm : And I must ever bear
 About with me, and carry to my Grave
 A Name so little, hiss'd, laugh'd, and pointed at,
 Poor, despicable, course born, and only sought for,
 To be a Harlot : O thrice cursed Thing,
 That I'm reputed fit for nothing else,
 Than the loose, lewd Pleasures of the *Monsieur* !
 O cursed Shame ! O fix'd eternal Stain !
 Which not the Blood of that ungrateful Man
 Can ever wash away ———
 The Subject's Beauty oft hath conquer'd Kings ;
 And Daughters of Common Nobility have been
 Promoted to the Beds and Thrones

Of greatest Monarchs: But the poor, hard-fated,
 Humble, and little Neice of *Richlieu*, has
 No Beauty, Blood, no Merit worth one Thought
 From the Impostor, Monster, Devil of Pride,
Orlinus; tho' a younger Brother.
 She so much undeserv'd so great a Favour,
 That its first motion could be thus repuls'd,
 With no less Shame, Disgrace, and sharp Contempt,
 Than the Indignity of Grooms and Varlets;
 Treating the Great, Renowned *Richlieu* with
 An impudent, vile Blow, that's only fit
 For Vagabonds.

But, Sir, I hope such Injuries as mine,
 Acted upon a Virgin's bleeding Fame,
 (So near in Blood, and nearer to your Heart),
 Will be revenged by the Heavens and you.

[To Pontaus.

Strat. I'm vex'd, perplex'd, and nothing have to say,
 Poor injur'd Soul, and yet my Fever burns
 As violent as thine; tho' I suppress
 The flaming Fury, 'till I do redress
 The Injury——

For this Barbarian (as thou justly call'st him)
 Has acted Outrage on my Honour too.

Pont. Thy Credit, Neice, I'll rescue soon again,
 Nor shall my Protestation be in vain.
 I have a Score of Justice to account
 And balance with the Brute, which will amount
 To many Millions; and if I pass thee
 One Mite of mine, Heavens never pardon me,
 Thou cruel Monster of Ingratitude.

Licost. My Guardian Angel, Father, best of Friends,
 My sacred Champion: Now my Transport flies
 From deep Abyss of Sorrow to the Skies.
 I'm elevate in Joy, my Torments cease,
 The anguish of my Soul relents, and I,
 'Twixt Grief and Joy, am forc'd to laugh and cry.
 Your glorious Resolution of Revenge,
 Is Divine Musick to my troubled Ears.

The

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

The sound of Vengeance, O thrice happy Sound !
Dispels my Sorrow ere it him confound.

Clod. I'm sorry, Cardinal, at this Affront :
My Blood is hot, and Passion fills my Veins,
That you, the Safe-guard of my Self and Crown,
Who by your Wit have conquer'd all my Foes,
Should thus be serv'd. Tell what you would be at :
Whate'er is your Desire, I'll propagate.

Strat. Banish your Brother from the Court, that all
Your Subjects may learn Wisdom from his Fall :
This is the way to brand him with Disgrace,
And print his Villainies upon his Face.

Clod. It shall be so ; for I can better live
Without a Brother, than a bosom Friend.
A famous States-man that out-wits the Wise,
Keeps peace at home, and blinds my Neighbours eyes.

[Exit Clodius, with his Guards and Attendants.]

Strat. I cannot wonder how the Monsieur durst
Profane my Ears, with so many false Protestations, and seducing
Sounds, directed to so bad an end. How impudent has he been in
making his Addresses, in my presence, I pressing forward his Suit.
But, my *Licosta*, be not quite cast down ;
For tho' thy Merit be but prized low
In Monsieur's Balance ; yet thy precious Worth
Is greater in esteem than heretofore,
With thy *Stratonice* ; whilst all thy Wrongs,
Like Diamond foil, but make thy Vertues shine.
Rest then contented, and thy Grief lay by ;
Thy Quarrel I'll revenge, or else I'll die.

[Exeunt.]

A C T III.

The SCENE, A Gallery in the King's Palace.

Enter Orlinus and Arnulfus.

Curse on this Church-States-man ;
He leads the whole Kingdom backwards, by the Nose ;
I must absent the Court within three days,
And come no more there, 'till the Cardinal please.

Arn. Does the King love his Priest better than his Brother ?

Orlin. So it seems : But the Cardinal makes the greatest Figure ;
And whatever he and the Queen say, the King must do.

Arn. O brave ! Then it is the Cardinal, then Queen, and the King.
But what is the Quarrel ?

For you and the Cardinal have ever been good Friends.

Orlin. I lately pull'd his leather Ears for him ;
And this is Holy Revenge.

Because I would have gone to Bed with his Neice,
Without going to Church.

Arn. I heard you had great Pretences of Kindness for the Lady,
And that you was like to die for love of her.

Orlin. Die for Love ! O brave ! what Man that was Master of his
Senses ever died for Love ?

No, no, there was no occasion to die for Love :

My Passion must not run beyond my Reason ;

Nor I so much undervalue my self to think of Marriage with such a
little inconsiderable Church-born Brat as she.

Arn. Tho' I must acknowledge that your High Birth entitleth
you to a more dignified Choice, than the Neice of a Prelate for a Wife
to the Royal *Orlinus* : Yet, as Princes have often dispensed with
meaner Deserts than hers (with submission to the Royal *Monsieur*)
I think at least, that after your former more Princely Choice, of more

Illu-

Illustrious Quality, it had been little or no Blemish in your Royal 'Scurcheon, to have been once over-rul'd more by pure Love than rigid Honour, in this Second Election : And therefore, what through the consideration of her Alliance to the High and Potent *Richieu*, her Interest in the Friendship of the Queen, but above all, the Recommendation of so much Youth, Wit, Beauty, and Vertue, I am of Opinion, That your Dispensation, in this Case, had been no im-pardonable Condescension.

Orlin. 'Pray, Sir, forbear ; no Beauty, Vertue, Wit, Nor Interest in the Queen can blind my Eyes : The old He-Goat, that Pharisaick Cheat, The Cardinal (her Uncle) told you so : But if I had an itching small design For private Recreation, and to act A Gamester's part, I might have had my Will, Without a Relique hung about my Neck, In an Ecclesiastick Collar, during Life. No, no, I must not, for so small a Prize, Turn Errant Knight, tho' you be pleas'd to grant Dispensing Power in favour of the *Saint*.

Enter Messenger from the King.

Messeng. The King my Master, Sir, desires that you Remove from Court, and make no more delay : The Cardinal, our Minister of State, Is much offended that you're so long here : He'll meddle no more with any great Affair, 'Till to another dwelling you repair.

Orlin. Go tell the Letcher, that I'll soon be gone, That Mountebank of State, that juggling Knave, Who plays his Pranks, and blinds my Brother's Eyes : Yet let him know from me, the time may come, Wherein I may his Injuries pay home.

[Exit Messenger.]

Enter Stratonice and Licofia.

Strat. Are you a Prince, the Brother of a King,
Of Royal Birth, and so ignoble a Mind?
How could you be so cruel to design
A Virgin-Lady's Ruine, in pretence
Of Marriage? whilst your aim was base and ill,
Loss, Shame, Disgrace, and Lewdness to fulfil.

Orlin. Madam, I cannot stay, I must be gone:
The Cardinal Commands, I must obey;
I have no time to answer Questions now:
I never muse on Marriage, nor on Maids;
But will resolve you, if you'll rest content.
Of all, when I return from Banishment.

Licof. Had I a Gorgon's Aspect, and the Eyes
Of Basilisks, the Tresses of a Fury,
The Throat of *Cerberus*, I would devour
Thee, cruel Monster, Cockatrice of Hell
Had I e'er given the least Affront to thee,
I had not grudg'd t'have born my Injury.

Orlin. I'll take no notice what a Magpie talks,
But will remember all your Uncle's Faults,
That cruel Dragon of Revenge and Spight,
The Kingdom's Scare-crow, Comet of the Night.

[Exeunt Orlinus and Arnulfus.]

Licof. Curs'd be thy Convoy, Furies thee attend;
May Life unhappy lead thee to thy end.

Strat. Love turn'd to Hatred, burns with greater rage
Than Jealousie: Yet tho' Revenge be sweet,
Vindictive Minds with adverse Fortune meet.

Licof. O I could suck his Blood, his Body sear
With Burning-Irons, Veins and Heart-strings tear,
Boil him alive; yet I shall ne'er fulfil
My wrath, till I both Soul and Body kill.

*The Royal Cuckold : Or,**The Scene, The Queen's Bed-Chamber.**Enter Pontzus and Pedro.*

Pont. Madam, I'm come to tell you of your Loss,
Which is no more than I at first expected;
Your Doctor, that Impostor's sneak'd away,
Without performing what you did desire:
His Promises are now dissolv'd to Air;
But no Man knows when he did go, or where.

Strat. And is the Monster fled, that impious Cheat,
That did pretend to work such Miracles?
He has obtain'd his end, and made a Prey
Of our Credulity; for we might thought
That his Pretences would but turn to nought.

Pont. They were so great, and so irrational,
That they the Course of Nature contradicted.
Reason such Fopperies never could allow;
But yet the King's more blamable than you.

Strat. He had of Money what he could desire,
Yet had not grudg'd it, had he kept his Word:
But natural Strength (as I have oft been told)
Could ne'er be bought with artificial Gold.

Licost. Great Madam, grieve not, tho' your Loss be great;
Kings, Queens, and Monarchs meet with adverse Fate:
What Nature in your Nuptial Bed denies,
Promotion in your Majesty supplies.

Pedr. Riches and Honour, Greatness, Beauty, Birth,
Are much desirable, and of great worth;
But yet the Joys of Wedlock are so priz'd,
That nothing can be with them equaliz'd.

Strat. Wedlock's the Honour of the Femal Sex;
The want of which each Virgin doth perplex:
But should not grudge my Fate, if I but had
Either a Child, or Husband in my Bed.

*[Exeunt Stratonice and Licosta.]**Pedr.*

Pedr. You have put the Queen in a longing Disease :
I shall know something more at her next Confession.
I must think on some moderate Pennance, to keep her insulting
Flesh from an Insurrection.

Pont. VVhat is this to our purpose ?
I am thinking on a more serious Matter ;
How to regain my Reputation, and be reveng'd on the audacious
Monsieur for my late Affront.

Pedr. Were it not dangerous I could put you in a fair way to it.

Pont. Dangerous, dangerous ! What Danger is't but I can An-
tidote ?

My Power's above the King's, and that you know.
If I but speak the Word, the Work is done.
I steer the Helm both of the Church and State.
The King and Queen my Force cannot withstand ;
And both must needs obey when I command.

Pedr. You say there's no way to frustrate *Orlinus* of the Crown,
unless the Queen be got with Child. Now, if this could be done,
you have your Aim. And I know by her last Confession she is in
love ; but I dare not discover it : For, by the Canon of the Church,
it is death for a Father-Confessor to reveal the Secrets of any, tho'
of more inferiour Rank than a Queen.

Pont. I from all Danger, sure, can set you free ;
I'll lose my Life ere you shall injur'd be.

Pedr. Swear then.

Pont. By the Pope's Great Toe I will.

Pedr. Swear deeper.

Pont. I swear by Purgatory.

Pedr. Deeper yet.

Pont. By our Lady's Girdle I will.

Pedr. 'Tis enough.

Pont. Then I Conjure you by Bell, Book, and Candle,
And all the Relicks of our Mother Church,
To tell me all the Secrets of your mind,
And henceforth me your Friend, you still shall find.

Pedr. Did you not observe the young Spark *Meander*, of whom
the Queen made choice to dance with at the Ball.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Pont. Yes, I did ; and he is a Gentleman of a comely Gesture, of good breeding, and a noble Behaviour.

Pedr. She is desperately in love with him, and knows not how to suppress her Passion.

Pont. Now my Work is done, my Revenge is conceiv'd, and a Bastard shall enjoy the Crown. Now I will shoot Furies at the proud *Orlinus*.

Pedr. But unless they be tip'd with Policy, they will never hit.

Pont. Yea, and Hypocrisie too, rather than miss.

Pedr. We must open to the Queen under what Inconveniences and dangerous Circumstances the Kingdom lyeth, for want of a Royal Heir, and perswade her to supply her Husband's Deficiency, with a more Potent Consort ; at which the King will certainly connive, if not condescend too.

Pont. 'Tis well spoke, honest *Pedro*. Rather than our Design should prove in vain, I'll sacrifice my Conscience to my Spleen.

Enter Meander and presenteth Pontæus with a Letter.

Which he readeth thus :

May it please your Eminence ;

THE Bearer is my Nephew, whom, for his better Accomplishment, I desire to stay a while at the French Court : If you will prefer him to any place during the time of his Abode, I shall requite you with the like Favour at Rome, when you lay your Commands on

Your Eminences most Humble,

and Devoted Servant,

S-I-L-V-O-N-A.

Sir, you are very welcome, and your Letter is very acceptable ; Your Uncle may freely lay his Commands on me, who am ready to serve him at all Times and on all Occasions. But what place, Sir, would fit you best ?

Meand.

Meand. Your Eminence knows better the Places at Court than I who am but a Stranger.

Pont. What do you think of being Gentleman-Usher to the Queen?

Meand. A very good place, but I am afraid that I cannot bear it out.

Pont. Why so?

Meand. I am but one of a small Fortune, and have not Money always at Command.

Pont. Money: For the Respect I owe your Uncle, I shall provide you with Money, if I find you a deserving Person, and grateful to your Friend.

Meand. Let me live no longer than I prove ungrateful for so great Favours—I'll not only be thankful, but hazard my Soul to serve your Eminence.

Pont. 'Tis enough, and if you'll call at my Chamber the Morrow Morning, I'll freely present you with 20000 Crowns.

And as you behave your self you shall find me your Friend or Foe.

Meand. I'll prostrate my Soul at your Eminence's Feet, to serve you to the utmost Limits of my Power. [Exit Meander.]

Pont. Now. *Pedro*, we may see how the Fates favour us, And the Stars concur with us in so just a Revenge: All things fall out better than we can propose.

Pedr. This Spark is very fit for what we design him. I doubt not but ere long he will make the King a Cuckold, And furnish the Kingdom with an Heir to the Crown.

Pont. And what is best of all, the Queen is in love with him.

Pedr. O here she is, speak of the Devil and he appears.

Enter Stratonice alone.

Strat. Ha. Cardinal, you are still a musing. State-Politicks will break your Brain.

What serious Considerations are now the Object of your Thoughts? Come, let me know.

Pont. I am not serious, *Madam*, only have been discoursing with a young Gentleman, one *Meander*, lately come from *Rome*, in whose behalf I was a coming a Suitor to your Majesty in the behalf of Merit.

Strat.

Strat. Merit, my Lord, and such an Intercessor for it are very prevailing Orators in any reasonable Suit.

Pont. The reasonableness of my Suit I'll refer to your fair self; when telling you I have Occasions of State, to remove an Officer, now in Service under your Majesty to another Post.

I would entreat your Gracious Acceptance of a Supply, to fill his Vacancy, in the Person of a Gentleman, one *Meander*; who, besides Noble Friends, has nobler Vertues his Advocates.

Strat. And what is he, that *Meander*?

Pont. Truly, *Madam*, he is a young Gentleman, whom Nature hath endued with all the Accomplishments that can attend one Man. 'Tis true, he's somewhat a Stranger at Court, and I suppose unknown to your Majesty, tho' I confess your Majesty has seen him once at least; and if, among your numerous Donations, of the like Favour, at that time, your Majesty might chance to take notice of him, I could recall him to your remembrance, by reminding you, that your Majesty did him the Honour to dance with him at the Ball the other Night. And tho' as young a Courtier as he is, yet being a Person of that remarkable Appearance, that not only the Approbation of the Court, in that fair Assembly, gave him some Respect; but my own Testimonials of his compleat worth can more fully answer for him: I am embolden'd to present him to you as one of your *Merits*, in the Capacity of your Majesty's Knight of Honour, your *Gentleman-Usher*.

Strat. Your Eminence speaks very favourably of him.

He must be a well accomplished Gentleman indeed,

Who obtains so high a Commendation from the famous *Richlieu*.

[Here a little Vermilion riseth in
the Queen's Face, which the Cardinal
taketh notice of.]

Pedr. And so he is, the best accomplish'd Gentleman that ever I saw.

Strat. Cardinal, I do not mind well accomplish'd Gentlemen. You needed not to have given your self all this Trouble, but to have us'd your own Pleasure: For the Choice of my Servants being always the least of my Care, you know what Persons are fittest for me.

But I am more troubled that this pretending Quack, who promised to cure my Husband's Deficiency, should have thus cheated me out of so much Money, and set my Expectation a longing.

Pont. Sure, Madam, you're a Lady of greater Judgment than to think, that *Art* could make up the Defects of *Nature*. All the Doctors in the World cannot make an Eunuch able to beget a Child. But I heartily wish the King had been like other Men. For without an Heir from the King and Queen, the poor Kingdom is undone, for many great and weighty Reasons, which are not convenient to be mentioned.

Strat. There is no help for that now.

The Kingdom must be contented.

A Crown can never want an Heir.

And there are several, if one fail, whose Right it is to inherit this.

Pont. There is not one of those fit to Rule.

But one from your Majesty's Bowels, endued both with your Wit and Vertue, would certainly make the Kingdom happy.

Strat. And what way, Cardinal, can I have Posterity?

Is it possible to beget my self with Child?

Pont. No, no, your Majesty knows how *Sarah* and *Rachel* brought forth Children on the Knees of other Women: So may his Majesty beget you with Child, by the help of some well-wishing Friend.

Strat. Pray be pleased, *Cardinal*, to make choice of some other Discourse, or some other Object for your Divertisement.

Pont. I am really serious with your Majesty;

And earnestly request for an attentive hearing.

For the good of this poor drooping Kingdom is my real and only Design.

Strat. O, you would have me to play the Whore.

You are Holy Church-men indeed.

Pont. No, Madam, in such Cases, there is no Whoredom play'd: For I believe you are as free from all lascivious Thoughts as Chastity it self: But to promote the Interest of the Nation by a Royal Heir, as the Case of the Kingdom now stands, is as lawful as formerly it was to raise Seed to the Dead.

Strat.

Strat. Since you will not leave off your provoking Discourse, I must leave your Company: Neither can I imagine what can be your hidden Design in so bold an Attempt. [*Exit Stratonice.*]

Pont. This is bad indeed.
And I'm afraid that all our Machines will prove but in vain:
And 'tis all long of your Superstitious Doings, that has made her so much a *Devoto*.

Pedr. Never fear. I'm the Turn-key of her Conscience:
I'll warrant you I'll let the Devil in.
We'll have another Bout, after I have given her a little Enlargement at Confession. But we must be sure to keep our new *Mon-sieur* in her Eye, with all the Splendour imaginable: For if once her Love begin to be lukewarm, all the VVheels we can turn will hardly bring our Project to perfection.

Enter Licofa.

Pont. VVelcome Niece, we want a little of your help to forward our Designs in your own Quarrel.

Licof. My Uncle may command my Assistance, what ever be the Design.

Pont. You are not ignorant of our Intentions; for I have already given you sufficient information how I intend to be reveng'd on *Orlinus*, and frustrate him of the Crown, by the help of Monsieur *Meander*, the Idol of the Queen's Eyes, and the Phoenix of her Affection; whom I have made Gentleman-Usher to her Majesty. Therefore be sure, that with Father *Pedro* and me, you lay hold on all Opportunities of extolling the Person, VVirt, and Gallantry of the *Chevalier* before the Queen; there being no better Instrument to whet Love than Praise.

Licof. Dear Uncle, tho' the Design terminates in down-right betraying the Honour, and rising the Chastity of my kind and dearest Mistress; yet all the sacred and binding Ties of Friendship shall be swallowed up in the insatiate thirst of Vengeance against the cruel *Orlinus*. But I should heartily wish that at first you had bended your VVits for a Revenge some other way.

Pedr. A Love-Plot is no unfriendly Design against your dear, and loving *Stratonice* (as you term her) after her Abstinence these twenty and three long Years.

Licof.

Licost. My zealous Revenge against *Orlinus* bends all my Sinews, makes my Blood boyl, and my Heart to leap within me. Nither can any Opposition come in my way but I shall step over it, so I can but rain a Deluge of Mischief and Vengeance on the top of the deceitful Monster. I'll blow the Bellows of your Fury, and (rather than fail) lend my helping Hand to the Hammer to hasten the Work of your Contrivance.

Enter Meander.

Pont. I see you're as good as you Word.
I'm glad you are come, for we have been talking of you;
And I intend to have a short Discourse with you in private.

Meand. I am still ready to receive and obey your Eminence's Commands. *[Exeunt Pedro, and Licosta.]*

Pont. As I told you at our last parting, I have plac'd you near the Person of the Queen, in the Quality and Post of her Majesty's Gentleman-Usher, and that you may make your Entrance not unworthy your self, I desire your acceptance of the 40000 Crowns which I promised you, which will afford you some little present help. And for the Respect I bear to your Relations, there shall no Person appear at Court in greater Splendour than your self: And to encourage you to be no ways sparing in any Equipage necessary thereunto, I assure you my Hand shall never be shut to you, but a constant Assistance shall daily flow from the same kind Fountain, to support that Figure I intend you shall make. But one Injunction I must lay upon you, which is, That as my Favours are never sullied with the Affectation of Vanity, for this Reason, and some other private ones of my own, I conjure you to make at least this part of my kindness an inviolable Secret. *[Leads him aside, and sheweth him several Bags of Money, under the Hangings.]*

Meand. I am so surpriz'd and confounded with the pouring Torrent of your Eminence's Bounty, that I am neither furnished with Language nor Posture, to be thankful for the Reception of such accumulated Favours heaped upon me, which shall be kept as secret as Confession, and as silent as the Grave.

Pont. Well, well, my noble *Monsieur*, never fear Riches and Honour, so long as I stand your Friend; which I assure to do so long as you prove real and ingenuous to me.

Meand. Real! and Ingenuous! I have covenanted with my Heart, to be as real and ingenuous to your Eminence's Shadow as to my own Soul.

Pont. 'Tis enough; but I must go about Business.
Send for your Money to your Chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

The Scene a Chamber.

Enter Pandora.

O Unhappy Fate! O I could put an end to my Days,

Meander, Meander, Oh my dear Meander!

Thou art not to be blamed for leaving thy loving *Pandora*.

But a bad Advice, bad Advice, O, the Queen, the Queen!

Enter Licofa.

Licof. And what of the Queen?

Pand. What? do you hearken, Huffy?

You ill-bred little Slut;

I could brain thee, thou bold Confidence.

[*Proffereth to strike
her with her Staff.*]

Licof. What is the matter, Aunt?

Why are you in such a Passion?

I believe you are troubled with Love Fits.

Pand. I must tell you, must I, Impudence?

Licof. If you please you may, Aunt;
I can keep a Secret.

Pand.

Pand. I have no Secret but what I desire the World to know of. The Queen, the Queen, O the Queen! She has, by her ill Advice, made my dear and sweet *Meander*, who lov'd me as his Life, to leave me; for now he says he is not minded, as yet, to marry.

Licof. But how do you know that the Queen is the occasion of all this?

Pand. Oh I know, I know.

Licof. 'Tis but the Devil that puts this vain Imagination in your Head; for I believe *Meander* loves you now as much as ever.

Love! how could he love you, the dry Trunk of an old Tree?

You are fit for nothing but to make Tinder of.

Pand. And what are you good for?

I hope to be married yet, for all this, before you.

Enter Stratonice and Meander.

Strat. What News now, old Gentlewoman?

Pand. I have no good News.

Licof. My Aunt is still in love, *Madam*; but Monsieur *Meander* is not so kind as he has been formerly.

Strat. You, Monsieur *Meander*, why are not you kinder to *Madam Pandora*?

Meand. I know not what kindness she would be at.

Strat. You must hug her, and kiss her, and be so sweet upon her, as if she were but fifteen years of Age.

Is not this your Desire, old Gentlewoman?

Pand. I love his Company now and then; and I think I'm no less deserving now, than when I was but fifteen Years old.

Strat. And do you think you could make as good a Bed-fellow?

Pand. And why not?

Strat. Why do not you take her to Church, and marry her, Monsieur *Meander*?

Meand. The old Gentlewoman now, doth not think of Marriage; only she intends to be merry.

Pand. Yes I do.

Strat. You see she is real: Why do not you marry her, as you promis'd.

Meand. I never design'd it.

Pand. Why did you promise then, what you did not design?

O you wicked Wretch! what, did you love me and court me for all this time? Was it to make a Whore of me?

Meand. I courted you, but could not love you.

Pand. O you double hearted Man! O the Deceit of Men! Pay me my Money that you borrow'd of me.

Meand. I know nothing of your Money; for none I borrow'd, and none I'll pay.

Pand. O Monster of Ingratitude! O Paradox of Nature! O wicked young Man! Is this your pretended Love? O the Devil take such Love.

[*Exit Pandora, in great Passion.*]

Strat. Monsieur *Meander*, you ought not to scoff and jeer an Old Gentlewoman so; Age should be reverenc'd; and, if you pretended to marry her, you ought to have been so good as your Word.

Licost. Madam, I am sure he never lov'd her; for all her Joynts shake, and are as cold as Ice: Her Breath stinks, and her Face is full of Wrinkles. Love her! She's fitter for the Grave than Love or Wedlock; and yet the Worms would have but a sorry Breakfast on her. Marry her! A young, proper, handsome Gentleman marry an old Chronicle? No, no, Madam, Monsieur *Meander* has been a Traveller, and knows Trap: He has been in Italy, Germany, Spain, Barbary; yea, and at the Holy Grave. He has oft (I believe) pretended a burning Love, when his Pulse was quite cold; and I suspect he has serv'd the old Gentlewoman so.

Strat. Have you ever been in Love, Monsieur *Meander*?

Strat. Once, Madam.

Licost. Ay, a hundred times.

Strat. And where liv'd that Dove that sat on the Pinnacle of your Affection?

Meand. Truly, Madam, since your Majesty is pleas'd to ask me so earnestly, I will be free; she was and is one of the Pope's Misses.

Strat. Was she handsome?

Meand. Yes, Madam: Her Hair were Tresses of Gold, far beyond the Rays of a rising Aurora; her Eyes were Diamonds, her Cheeks Roses, her Lips Scarlet, her Skin Alabaster, her Breasts Mountains of Snow, &c.

Licost. Did you enjoy her under the Moon, *Meander*?

Meand.

Meand. I never took but one Vow, and that is, Not to kiss and tell.

Strat. I commend thee, *Meander*; but had *His Holiness* known this, he had certainly made thee a Cardinal.

Licost. He was liker to have made him one of his *Eunuchs*.

Strat. Did you ever draw your Sword for a Mistress?

Meand. I have oft drawn my Sword in Vindication of my Honour, Madam, but never for Love. Yet a Lover can never be a Coward; for what Man will deny to fight for what is dearest to him, and what he most desireth to enjoy?

Licost. Madam, there is no necessity for Monsieur *Meander's* fighting for a Lady; his Presence is enough to conquer her Affection.

Meand. I own indeed, that being once invited to a Gentleman's House in *Spain*, I chanc'd to cast a careless Eye and Smile on his Lady, which she return'd with a cheerful Blush; which the jealous Gentleman perceiving, drew upon me immediately: But having disarm'd him, and made him know himself, I kiss'd the Lady, and bade farewell. But this, Madam, was to vindicate my Honour, and no Love Combat.

Licost. But what were your Thoughts in the time of your Smiles? I believe they have been amorous enough.

Meand. No matter; thoughts without a further progress, made never any contest.

Strat. O yes, yes, I believe so; you're an innocent Saint; but your Eye and Complexion betray you.

Enter Pedro.

Strat. Had you not come in time, I had sent for you, Old Father.

Ped. I'm glad I am so fortunate as to prevent your Majesty's Trouble.

Strat. There's a young Gentleman here, lately come from *Spain*, who wants a Father Confessor to unload his Conscience of several Tuns of amorous Sins.

Meand. No, no, Father, there's no necessity yet, I have not been so long at the Court of *France*.

Pedr.

Pedr. Truly I look upon you to be a worthy Gentleman, and molested by no Vice, unless it be with a Thorn in the Flesh.

Meand. No, nor with that neither.

Strat. I believe you are an old Sinner, tho' a young Man.

Licost. Truly I look upon Monsieur *Meander* to be a well-accomplish'd Gentleman every way; tho' I must acknowledge that he, is Flesh and Blood, and may love a Lady as well as other Men.

Strat. No doubt but he doth: But you and I must be gone; we will leave him with his Father Confessor. Be sure you confess all or none, and make a clear Conscience; be sure to lighten it quite, or else not at all.

[*Exeunt Stratonicæ and Licostæ.*]

Licost. exiens. This is the finest Gentleman that ever I saw.

Strat. He is a very fine Gentleman, give the Devil his due; } *They*
Only he wants a little Confidence. } *whif-*
 } *per.*

Licost. Oh, my Uncle will teach him that.

Pedr. Monsieur *Meander*, I see you are in favour with the Queen; She talks so intimately with you, as if you were of the Race Royal, and had been her intimate Acquaintance these several Years.

Meand. 'Tis the Queen's Goodness; and I swear upon my Honour I never saw any thing I admire more.

Pedr. You must learn Confidence, and by degrees you may come to be in her Favour.

Meand. I must not suddenly aspire too high, lest unawares I fall from the top of my Expectation, and be in a worse Condition than if I had never known what it was to be Great.

Pedr. You speak well; but there's no fear, so long as the Cardinal and I are resolv'd to pillar you up against all the Machines of Envy that Fury can invent.

Enter Pontæus.

Pont. How now, *Meander*? how are you pleased with your new Preferment? and, How do you like your Royal Mistress?

Meand. Like her, and please your Eminence! 'Tis impossible but every thing that is Humane must kneel to such Divine Goodness; nay, her very Guardian Angels must be in love with her.

Pont. Now you speak like a passionate Servant indeed: But I perceive you are rightly qualify'd for a Courtier; you can play the Flatterer so expertly.

Meand.

Meand. Nay, my Lord, (whatever other Qualifications of a Courtier I may justly mourn the want of) I am no ways desirous of that common Court trapping Flattery, as fashionable as it is now worn. Besides, I believe your Eminence is sensible of that Royal Merit in the Person of the Queen, that deserves a better and abler Panegyrist than my self; the highest Character I can give such sublime Excellency, being only the universal Duty of all that have the Honour to be blest with the umbrage of it; and that I am no more than one of the Crowd that pay it her.

Pont. Well, well; the Queen is not ungrateful for the kind Character you give her; for She is pleas'd to return you as kind a one. But to put one Question to you; Could you love the Queen?

Meand. Love her, my Lord!

Pont. Yes, love her; love that Divine Goodness you have painted so beautiful? Examine your Heart, and faithfully answer me that serious Question.

Meand. My Lord, there's something so amazing in the Question demanded, that I am unprovided with Sense enough to understand you: But since your Eminence's absolute Command requires my Answer, and I dare not be so insolent as to ask an explication; I can only reply, That had Providence, the Great Disposer, debas'd the Quality of the fair *Stratonice*, level to the poor *Meander*, or advanced mine up to her's; and the Divine Dispenser so ordain'd to lodge such Beauty in my Arms, I could out-pride my self in such a Prize, above the famous *Alexander* with his conquer'd Universe; Lord of a fairer World than his Sword ever conquer'd, or his Ambition wept for.

Pedr. If then for the Safety and Glory of the Nation, in furnishing the Crown with an Heir, the Royal Grace of the Queen, and the Interest of your assisting Friends, by planting so fair a Grove of Laurels for you, in the stollen Pleasures of so sweet a Paradise, I hope you are not of too strait-lac'd a Conscience, but so fair a Lady——

Meand. Conscience, old Father! No; there's that higher Divinity in the fair *Stratonice's* Charms, that all things move a Sphere below it. The enjoyment of such Bliss, carries its own Consecration; and I could mix my Oraisons to such Beauty, even with my Prayers to Heaven.

Pont.

Pont. I find, *Meander*, that you are a passionate Soldier, and would hazard all to storm a Citadel under a Lady's Banner: But there are a great many Pallisado's, and Barricado's, of rigid Vertue and Chastity in the way; but let not these dishearten you; the surmounting of these Bars shall be the Work of Father *Pedro* and me: For as thick a Mass of Ice as Honour hath hardened about her Heart, we have Incense and Altar-Coals ready to thaw it: And Religion it self shall be the ministring Instrument to soften her most obdurate Scruples of Conscience; and therefore your Business is only to be assiduous and officious about the Person of the Queen, your silent Services being all the Address you must dare to make; for the distance of a Crown'd Head will admit of no bolder approach; your Province being no more than to attend the Consummation of your destin'd Felicity. But above all things remember (and that with a religious observance) that you are pushing for that Conquest which will admit of no Triumph; for there is more than Fairy Treasure in the Blessing design'd you; a Secret to be seal'd up in eternal Silence, and priz'd as valuable as your Life.

Meand. If ever I proffer to reveal so weighty and noble a Secret, let my Blood suffer for it; let my Life be at an end, and my Memory be hateful to all Men living.

Pont. 'Tis enough; go attend the Queen's Person, and leave the rest to us. [Exit *Meander*.]

Pedr. This young Spark is a hopeful Knight-Errant, and fit enough for our Business. I hope ere long our great Machine shall go.

Pont. *Orlino* did but put my Ear a little aside; but I hope ere long to put his Nose out of joint.

Pedr. You are in a fair way for it: And what is more than all, your Neice by her Wit in recommending the Monsieur to the Queen, has augmented her Love-Wound; for scarce a Day passeth over, but she artfully insinuateth into the Queen some Good Thought, with a kind Eye for the Monsieur *Meander*. She finds him more than ordinary access, and magnifieth with all the little Arts of her Menage, and applause his careful Service and constant Attendance. And more than this, she cunningly engageth him in those pleasing Narrations, before the Queen, of his Travels and Adventures, as infinitely contribute to the Queen's divertisement; which he relateth so ingeniously, that he discovereth such a Treasury of that rich Wit and Sense,

Sense, as must needs plume new Darts from this new Quiver, and heighten the impending fatality of those more than dangerous Charms, which truly before were too Mortal.

Pont. You find it so by her Confession?

Pedr. I do, and it will be no hard matter to accomplish our Design: For the poor Queen came lately to me, with such a big and lamentable account of her Female Weakness, and a dismal Violence committed upon her Heart, by the more and more prevailing Influence of her bold and formidable Encroacher, as requires no small expiatory Contrition. I being well pleased with her Confession, told her it was more her Vertue than her Sin, took a very gentle Cognisance of her Frailty, and gave her so easie an Absolution, that by the cheapness of her present Balm, she had reason to believe that her Offence was not altogether so frightful as her own swait-lac'd Conscience had represented it, if her Ghostly Father's Spectacles saw true.

Pont. If the Dimensions of her Wound be such, the Iron is hot enough; and if ever it be malleable, this is the time; therefore let us go presently, and desire a private Audience of the Queen.

Pedr. There is one thing lies in the way; which is this: Tho' I question not our Ability in furnishing a great many sinewy and forcible Arguments, the necessary Artillery toward a general Storm; yet we shall be found very unqualified Orators on this Theme. For in spite of all the pretended fair Face of Zeal and Religion, designed for our purpose, I am sensible that the Queen's piercing Judgment will discover the Vizor, and detect the rooted and gangreen'd Malice and Revenge against *Orlinus*.

Pont. Where hast thou been all this time? shut up in a Cell? By my private Agents (utterly to stifle all suspicion of the least remaining Dreg of Spight, or Resentment against *Orlinus*) he is recall'd to Court; and I have appear'd so cool, so easie, and so Gall-less in the Remission of so heinous an Affront, and in hushing up of so noisie a Storm, in so sudden and unexpected a Calm, that I am the Subject of Universal Wonder.

Pedr. I'm glad to hear it, and you have done very wisely: For your Lenity herein, will not only breed Astonishment, but declare you as meek as a Cloistered Saint, refund your Christian Moderation, and conceal the Cloven Foot of our present Design.

Enter Stratonicæ.

Strat. What's the matter now? you look both as if you had been doing Penance.

Pedr. No, an't please your Majesty, we have been but at Pray'r.

Strat. Devotion's good Exercise: But what have you been praying for?

Pedr. We have been praying for you, and the good of the poor languishing Kingdom, that Heavens may yet be so kind as to furnish the Crown with an Heir from the Veins of the illustrious *Stratonicæ*.

Pont. O what Calamities hang over the Head of this Nation, occasioned all by the Childless Bed of the Unfortunate *Capo*! O how much groans this Kingdom under this Affliction? and what inexpressible Delight and Transport would the Subjects be in? If Heavens would yet hear the Prayers of an Age, and

relieve the Distresses of a People, in opening a Gate to their Bliss, by raising them a Branch from so Divine and so Dear a Sovereign Stock.

Strat. I am highly obliged both to you and my kind Peoples Wishes: But since the immutable Will hath otherwise ordain'd it, you must all acquiesce in the Divine Pleasure, and cease those fruitless Prayers, which Heaven hath manifestly decreed to be in vain.

Pedr. In vain, *Madam*? why so? who can fathom Providence, or know the Measure of our Mercies? tho' our worldly Felicities be all formed for us above, our Study and Industry may prove the effective Means in receiving them.

Strat. By what Study and Means can I Heir the Crown of *France*? and how can I have a Child, whilst my Husband is an Eunuch born?

Pedr. We your nearest and faithfullest Servants, beg your Majesty, on the Knees of our Compassion, to lay aside all Scruples of Conscience, and propagate the Royal Seed, by one who may personate and act for your unhappy Husband, in this lamentable Scene. My Lord Cardinal (like the Pope himself) can make that which is Sin, no Sin, when the work is design'd for a good end.

Strat. Oh, now I find where you are: But could Conscience be laid aside, I should still be the same; for my Honour is to me of more worth than a Kingdom.

Pont. Consider, Gracious Lady, how the natural Orb of this Kingdom's Glory is totally shaded: Therefore let your pitying Goodness supply some borrowed Luminary, or all the Light of *France* must set for ever. Therefore let no sudden Fantom assume a shape to fright you from the Performance of so advantageous an undertaking.

Strat. How can you delude and persuade me, that Conscience is but a Fantom? whilst the Law prohibiteth all Uncleanness, under the danger of Eternal Death: Yea, and the Breach of the Seventh Commandment is reckoned among the deadly Sins, even by the greatest Clergymen of the *Roman Church*.

Pont. If any Personal Defect render the Nuptial Consummation impossible, the Conjugal Bed cannot be defiled. Now since by the fatal Wants of the lamented *Clodius*, all our Hopes are excluded; what Injury, what Injustice to her Husband, can the fair *Stratonice* commit, under so urgent a Call?

Strat. I perceive the Interest of *France*, and the benefit of an Heirless Kingdom is the chief Object of your Design. But you are a Church-man, and should know that we ought not to use pernicious Means, for the attainment of a seeming good End: For what profiteth *France* to me, or all the World beside, if I lose my own Soul?

Pont. No, no, *Madam*, never fear, there is no Scruple in the Sacred Counsel I have given you; for when extraordinary Occasions call, we are permitted the use of extraordinary Instruments. Look back, *Madam*, but to the Creation of the World, and you will see the first Original of Mankind raised even by Incestuous Beds, a Generation betwixt Brother and Sister. And if so Universal a dispensing Power was exercised, for the benefit of Mankind, shall one singular dispensing Act, for the Benefit of a whole Nation, be Capital? especially

especially where that Dispensation infringes no Law, violates no Right, and breaks no Command, as has been so fully proved to your Majesty.

Strat. The Peopling of the World by Incestuous Beds, is a very foolish Argument; and but polisheth the Brass of your Diabolical Drift: For there was no Incest till the Law was given. But Adultery was still Adultery, since the beginning of the World: Neither can you say any thing of force to this purpose; but run to and fro in a Circle of Nonsense.

Pont. Alas, *Madam*, 'tis the Intention makes the Sin: The Gratification of a Lust may be Criminal, whilst the preservation of a Kingdom shall be unblameable: Therefore stagger not your Royal Reason there; but examine the practice of Imperial Policy, in innumerable Examples. How many of the great *Roman Casars* have adopted Sons, to inherit the very Empire of the World? And if adopted Heirs, utter Aliens, and Strangers to the Blood, were so publickly let in to rise up in Bar of all the nearest Imperial Demandants; and so notorious. Exclusion of Lineal Right, justified by those strict and critical Observers of Moral Justice, the *Roman Administrators*. How much more Righteous will an Adoption to the Crown of *France* appear, when so far from an Alien, it shall challenge, at least half the Royal Tide, in the rich Veins of the fair Partner of the Throne, the fair *Stratonice*? and the other Additional borrowed part, only a charitable Supply of Indigence, and support of weakness.

Pedr. A Prophecying Martyr could not have delivered more Oraculous Truths than the profound, and Divine Reason the noble Cardinal has uttered.

Pont. *Madam*, what I have uttered has been delivered in all Truth and Fidelity, without a Taint of the least malicious or sinister Thought. I confess, indeed, I have received Wrongs from *Orlinus*, and perhaps crying Ones, but have freely from a real Heart forgiven him.

Pedr. Forgiven him? yes, and so Exemplar a Forgiveness, as the admiring World resounds it even to your Reproach.

Pont. Believe me, *Madam*, I have given you Counsel, and perhaps may have surprized you in it; but must answer for it at my last breath; neither can your greatest Confident bear his Charge more faithfully than *Richlieu*. Better a thousand sinking Kingdoms Mourn, than the fair Soul of the Celestial *Stratonice* should trip, even into criminal Thoughts, by the misleading Counsel of *Richlieu*. I would not have so black a Sin to answer for at my last Audit of Eternity, as the betraying of my Royal Mistress, for twice that Kingdom's Price, for whose Glory I am so solicitous.

Strat. Where shall I hide my blushing Head! Or how shall I be able to look Day in the face, to think that two such Reverend Professors of Christianity durst ask me such a Question! No, my Lord Cardinal, I will not enter into dispute with you; for I am too weak to play the Casuist against such Learning; but answer you in my own Province. Had you been a sensible Judge of that worldly Honour you mentioned; you would have sooner bit that Tongue out, than have dared to motion such Profanation to your Royal Mistress, as you term her.

Pont. *Madam*, pray have a right Understanding, and be not rash; for—

Strat. For shame, for shame, no more : Flatter me not, blind Guides ; cease this fruitless Suit ; for when you can move the Globe, hope to shake me ; for the Attempts are equally impossible.

Pedr. May it please your Majesty to hear me but one Word.

Strat. No, no ; eternally forbear the repetition of this Day's Folly, or see my face no more. [Exit Stratonice, in great Passion.]

Pedr. This will never do. *Pont.* Curse on her Obstinacy and Perverseness.

Pedr. If this will not do, I know another way how you may be reveng'd on *Orlinus*.

Pont. No less Revenge can expiate my Fury, than the loss of a Crown and Kingdom.

Pedr. Then we must rally again, and raise new Batteries, and must manage new Mines and Trenches for carrying on our Approach : And what think you, Sir, if the Queen, by some Stratagem or other, at some unguarded Minute, should be snar'd into *Meander's* Arms ? Consider, poor harmless Creature, a meek Virgin as she is, how insensible she is of the unexperienc'd Felicity ; and her Ignorance is the only Rock against us. Oh you cannot imagine, upon such a surprize, how presently her Ice would melt before him ; the Offender, with his short-liv'd Guilt, would quickly play that ample Peacemaker, that after the relish of such a riotous Feast of Sweets, undoubtedly the Taste would soon create the Appetite : And I assure you, you need not doubt fixing him the entire Lord of her Ascendant, and producing a prosperous Revolution of your utmost Designs.

Pont. I like your Proposal so well, that I will steer to the golden Coast of all my Hopes by no other Chart ; and my Niece *Licosta*, the Queen's bosom Favourite, shall be the chief Actor in this Scene of Vengeance. [Exeunt omnes.]

ACT V. *The Scene Licosta's Chamber.*

Enter Stratonice and Licosta.

Licost. **A** H, Madam, I am the unhappiest of my Sex.

Strat. How, my *Licosta* ! What new Cloud dares shade that Brow ? Has Fortune any more envenom'd Shafts against that envy'd Beauty, after so many extravagant Bolts of her Malice, in the Insolencies of the ungrateful *Orlinus* ?

Licost. Yes, Madam, she has new Vengeance, and the same *Orlinus*, to pour it down upon me : For, after all my Load of Injuries from that vile Man, to compleat his Villainies, he has, this morning, bribed one of my Women to admit him into my Chamber this night, when I am in Bed.

Strat. How, my *Licosta* ! After all his impious Barbarities, has he a new Reserve of Execrations ? Is his Mine of Mischief inexhaustible ? But above all, after so wonderful a condescending Mercy of the forgiving Cardinal, is this his kind return ?

Licost.

Licost. Yes, Madam, to so generous, I might, rather say shameful a remission of so many notorious Insolencies, this is his Gratitude.

Strat. Rather than such Wickedness shall be unpunish'd, I my self shall be thy Champion; and not only all my Interest with the King, but also my whole Power in the World shall be arm'd against him.

Licost. Ah, great and worthy Madam, I have not Expressions to thank you for your Royal Goodness.

[*Licostia falls on her Knees whilst the Queen raises her up again.*]

Strat. Fear not the wicked *Orlinus*, for I my self will be your Guard; and you may cause your Woman appear publicly against him, and confront him with his wicked Design, to the open face of the World: And if he be past all Shame, and the Disgrace of so unprincipally a Design, so loudly detected, be not punishment sufficient, then leave his further prosecution to me.

Licost. Alas, Madam, pardon me when I tell you, That such a proceeding against him, would be the most ill-manag'd Policy imaginable: For as the treacherous *Monsieur* had harden'd Guilt enough to hatch such a piece of Treachery, he has no less harden'd Confidence to deny it too; and what would the single Breath of a Creature of my low Quality signifie in so heinous a Charge against a Prince of the Blood? And how much would the Reputation of the *Monsieur*, in the popular Balance, out-weigh the Credit of so poor an Accuser? And so the whole Impeachment, instead of punishing the guilty *Monsieur*, would rather retort and wound the innocent *Licostia*; when the mis-judging World, upon such a Defeat, might be too apt to lay the original Malice of the Accusation, not at the Servant's, but at the Mistress's Door. No, Madam; if I would make some able Justice in my Cause, the only means of gaining that point would be, by having the *Monsieur* caught at the guilty hour in my Chamber, with some more authentick Witness planted there, to confront his intended Wickedness (if such a one could be obtain'd) whose not only Credit, but power also, should be able both to publish and avenge my Wrongs.

Strat. Since the Train is laid not only against the Honour of you, my dear *Licostia*, but the very Scene of his Treachery is most audaciously laid under my Roof, and so near my Bed-Chamber, I my self will be that confronting Testimony against him; for I intend this Night to lie in your Bed: Therefore let the *Monsieur*, at the hour, be admitted——I will not stay two Minutes.

[*Exit Stratonicé, in haste.*]

Licost. Now I hope the Business is done. I receiv'd the Injury, and my Hand shall open the Sluce of Vengeance, which shall flow a Deluge of Loss, Distraction, and Madness, on the Head of the ungrateful *Orlinus*——*Pelanda, Pelanda.*

Enter Licostia's Chamber-Maid.

Maid. Did you call, Madam?

Licost. Yes: Let all my Servants go to bed, and my Lodging be kept quiet; for I am much indispos'd, and have taken Physick: But you may attend 'till after Twelve a Clock; and when the Doctor cometh to the Door, be ready to let him in.

Maid. Yes, Madam.

Licost.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Licof. Go then, and mind what I have said. I cannot yet go to bed, but must walk in my Chamber 'till the Doctor come. *[Exit Maid.]*

O cruel Fate! O curs'd unhappy Man!
That I should thus, for meer Revenge, trapan
My best of Friends, my Mistress, and undo
Her Name, her Honour, and her Vertue too,
But since I swore to be *Orlinus's* Foe,
I'll do't; for my Revenge will have it so.

Enter Stratonic.

Strat. I have not stay'd long. *Licof.* No, Madam, 'tis but Ten a Clock.

Strat. Is it so late? *Licof.* Yes, Madam.

Strat. Then I must go to bed, and wait for my Spark.

Licof. Pray-do, Madam; for his coming is uncertain.

[Licofa conveys her under the Hanging, and returns.]

Enter Meander, and whispers Licofa in the Ear.

Meand. Is the Queen gone to Bed?

Licof. Yes, yes; but you may hold a little, for she is not quite undress'd.

Meand. Is there any body with her?

Licof. No, no; our Design is more private.

Meand. I cannot stay longer.

Licof. Come then: And be sure you behave your self like a Lover: 'Tis Now or Never.

Meand. I do not doubt but I shall.

[She leads him near the Queen's Bed, and returns.]

Enter Pandora.

Pand. How now, Niece? How does the Night pass away with you?

Licof. What do you want; why are you not a-bed? I cannot sit that an old Woman, like you, should turn Night-Walker; and be on the ramble about Twelve a Clock at night.

Pand. My Business is of great weight; it is upon Life and Death: I must speak with the Queen, who came in here. I am to beg for a poor Man's Par-
don, who is like to suffer to-morrow.

Licof. This is an unseasonable time, therefore go to bed: You cannot speak with the Queen to night.

Pand. Ay but I must and will speak with her.

Licof. Prithce go ask for her then: She is not here. *Pand.* But I'm sure she is.

[She looketh under the Hanging, and seeth Meander and her a-bed together.]

Licof. You're an uncivil old Fool, more confident than the Devil. Get you to the Door, you amorous old Beast.

[She pusheth her to the Door.]

Pand. It'll fit you as well, you bold ill-bred Puss.

Enter Pontzus *Pont.* What's the matter between you and your Aunt?

Licof. She comes in here now, for all it is so late, and will needs speak with the Queen, when she cannot be spoke with.

Pont. Where is the Queen?

Licof. In my Bed, with Monsieur *Meander*.

Pont. I wish them ill rest: But doth *Pandora* know?

Licof. In spite of my Heart she pry'd within the Hanging, and saw them—

Pont.

Pont. There's the Devil on't; we're all ruin'd: 'Tis a hundred to one but she is gone to tell the King; for she is as envious as the *Old Serpent*, and cannot endure that one should but smile upon *Meander*.

Licost. Sure she will not be so much a Devil.

Pont. Tho' she by my Sister, if she do such a thing, I'll confine her to a Dungeon, where she shall lie for term of Life, to feed upon Bread and Water, without the least glimpse of Light, depriv'd of the Company of Man, Woman, and Child.

Licost. O sad! here's the King: We're all undone.

[Enter Clodius Capo, with a pair of Horns on his Head, attended only with Pandora.]

Clod. Came my *Stratonice* in here?

Licost. Please your Majesty, she was here, but she is gone.

Clod. But I believe she is not gone.

Pont. I have not seen her here since I came. *[Pandora looketh under the Hanging, whilst Clodius perpeeth in too.]*

Pand. But she was here just now.

Come look here, if I please your Majesty.

Clod. No truly, it doth not please my Majesty, old Gentlewoman.

Pand. Treason! Treason!

Clod. Treason! Treason! Call the Guards.

[The Queen comes, frighten'd and under the Hanging, in a disguised manner.]

Stras. O thou impotent, old, jealous Fool! Monster of Humankind! Paradox of R royalty! and Stain to all Kings! Dost thou court the Horns, and glory in thy own Disgrace? Sound the Trumpet of thy own Insufficiency, make thyself a Cuckold, and me a Whore? Come, come, I have hitherto conceal'd your Defects, and intended now to have put the scoffing World to silence, by furnishing you with an Heir, and to have taken away all suspicion of your Inability: But since it is your pleasure to ruine your own Reputation, and stain my Virtue, go on, and see what will be the result of your Folly. But (since I can make it appear before the World, that what I do is for your Credit, and the Interest of the poor afflicted Kingdom) all wise Men will conclude me a virtuous provident Woman, and repute you a foolish impotent Coxcomb; and that's more than ever I hitherto said. Put up your Horns then in your Pocket, and proclaim not your own Shame and Weakness: Get you to bed, and trouble not a Gentlewoman's Chamber at such a time of the Night.

Pont. Your Majesty is much blamable in this, for the Queen speaketh like a good Woman, and is very tender of your Credit. *[He puts up his Horns in his Pocket.]*

Stras. I have kept his Secret these one and twenty Years, and endured a long Abstinence; and now to prevent all contest in Succession to the Crown, and stop the Mouths of all Kings and Subjects in Christendom, who begin to mutter of his Weakness, I intended this, not out of any wanton Design, but even to the hazard of my Soul to serve him and his Subjects, now take this for my Pain. O what a Cloud of Grief, Loss and Disgrace has your Foolishness brought upon my Head.

[Licostia slips in under the Hanging, to see what is become of Monsieur Meander, where she stays with him all Night.]

Pont.

Pont. The greatest Project of Wit is soon brought to nothing, if it be not assisted and supported by wile and Secret Contrivances, and carried on with real and unanimous Proceedings, without Jugling, Discord, Contention and Brawling. Husband and Wife are but one Flesh; and if one be divided and rise up against the other, both come to ruin.

Clod. If I have given my Wife and you any Offence it is your own Fault, because you did not acquaint me sooner with your Design: It was well contriv'd, and intended for a very lawful End: And I assure you, dear Wife, I will never henceforth give you the least Offence upon this account; and I beg Pardon for what I have already spoke.

Stras. Be kind to your self, and as careful of your Credit, as I am provident for your Good. I run all Hazards to do you a Kindness; and if I happen to have a Child (as I heartily wish I may, to serve you and the poor longing Kingdom) your young Heir, (for ought I know) may happen to send me to the other World.

Clod. Well, well, speak no more, but hope for the best. If we be but one Flesh (as the Cardinal says) the Child will be mine as much as yours.

This Impudent, Tale-bearing, Flattering, Old Amorous Devil has bred all this Discord betwixt my Wife and me, but it shall never be so again.

[To Pandora, who sneakes to the Door.]

Stras. She deserves to be broke upon the Wheel, for she would have broke the whole Interest of *France*, which now lyeth at Stake; and I'm afraid the old Fool's Tongue will run yet.

Pont. No, no, Madam, I'll secure her from talking: but I'm assur'd to own her for my Sister.

Clod. I judge it best for me to go to Bed.

Stras. I'll go with you. *[Exit Clodius.]*

Pont. You told him his own, and I commend you. But I vow his Horns become him mighty well.

Stras. Ay, ay, let him wear them; but he never had that which can make us both one Flesh: I know better things now.

[Exit Pontius and Stratonice, whilst Meander and Licostia soon follow after.]

The SCENE *Capo's Dining-Room.*

Enter Orlinus and Arnulfus.

Orlinus. Methinks in my Absence from Court, it is changed, as it were, to another Scene; it looks strange: Yet all things seem to be in good Order, and performed in great Decency.

Arn. All things seem to me as they were formerly.

Orlin. But what is he, this Monsieur *Meander*, who is term'd *Le Grand*, the Queen's Gentleman-Usher, he makes a great Figure, and is much in the Queen's Favour.

Arn. He's a little poor Spark, that lately came from *Rome*, who now, by the help of the Cardinal, is come to that height of Favour and Promotion, that he dares to huff, and set light by the best Nobility of *France*.

Orlin.

Orlin. So; I'll take him up ere long. *Enter Pontæus.* How now, *Cardinal*?

Pont. O Fate be praised, I'm overjoy'd to see my dear Son, and most faithful Friend; That which I so much longed for, is at last come to pass. Why should a trifling Word, or a transient Blow in Passion, breed any contest between my greatest and best Favourite and me? *[Hugs him in his Arms, with Hypocritical Tears in his Eyes.]*

Orlin. Truly, *Cardinal*, had I not been a little tipsie that Night there had been no Controversie betwixt you and me. However, to make you amends, I find you so much a Christian, that I will marry your Niece now, (if she'll be pleased to accept of me) and make her Sharer in my Fortune, tho' it were tripple the Conquest of *Alexander the Great*.

Pont. Royal Sir, my Niece was so much concerned with her own misfortune and mine in the last propos'd Tender, that now she is quite-averse from any purpose of Marriage; and if I could persuade her to throw by her rigid Resolution, I am not sure but the result might be all one; there still being the same distance betwixt your Royalty and her Meanness: However, Sir, if you think fit I'll acquaint her with what you say, and return you her answer.

Orlin. Do then, and tell her, I'll make her Satisfaction for her Wrong, and make up all her Loss with Advantage, and really perform what, at present, I proffer. *[Exit Orlinus.]*

Pont. Pray, Sir, will you resolve me one thing? *Arn.* If I can I will.

Pont. Is the *Monsieur* real in his Proposal? or is it only to banter me and vent his jealous Passion in an undeserved Revenge?

Arn. No, truly, I am persuaded he speaks his mind really with an honest intencion, and it has troubled him much, since he has been from Court, that ever things fell out betwixt your Niece and him as they did: And *Pedro's* Brother, his Father Confessor, plainly told him in publick, that Marriage was the only Satisfaction that could make up your Niece's Wrong.

Pont. And you think so really?

Arn. Yes, really and I know as much of his mind as any Man else, unless it be his Father-Confessor.

Enter Licofa. *Arn.* I am a little in haste, and will leave you with your Niece, but wait upon your Eminence at some other time. *[Exit Arnusius.]*

Pont. What will be your Resolution now, Niece? *Orlinus's* Love is become real indeed, and will make you his Wife, tho' his Fortune were greater than the Conquests of *Alexander the Great*. He is told by his Ghostly Father, that nothing less can make you satisfaction for your Wrong.

Licofa. It is all one to *Licofa*. *Pont.* Why so, will you not have him?

Licofa. Have him now? when he hath so much slighted me, and is himself put by the Crown.

Pont. How so?

Licofa. The Queen is with Child by Monsieur *Meander*.

Pont. Curse on Misfortune: This confounded Revenge has ruin'd us all. I could give her Phylick, and make her miscarry; but *Meander* and she will be at it again, and so it will be all one.

Licof. Ay, so they will: But alas, Uncle, why should I speak of marrying the King's Brother, when I am undone?

Pont. Undone! how undone?

Licof. Through your Contrivance, and in Obedience to your cruel Commands, I have betray'd my Royal Friend; I have debased my self to the acting even of the vilest and most despicable Office of the most sordid of my Sex; and worst of all, I'm undone, I'm undone, I'm undone.

Pont. Your Words, Niece, are Mysterious, I know not what to make of them: How are you undone, undone, undone?

Licof. Alas, when the Queen was surprized by the King's coming into my Chamber, where Monsiur *Meander* was a Bed with the Queen: After she had made up the Breach with the King, I went in to see how it far'd with poor *Meander*; but from one degree of Love to another, we came to that height, that he had no Power to forbear, and I had no strength to resist. And thus my poor Mistress and I are now both with Child by Monsieur *Meander*: Therefore 'tis the greatest of Follies to think on my marching with *Orlinus* now—
Curse on Revenge.

Enter Meander. *Pont.* How now, Monsieur *Meander*?

Mend. How do you do, *Cardinal*?

Pont. You speak more boldly than heretofore; one Night's Lodging with the Queen has taught you Confidence enough: But yet be not ingrate, nor unthankful to your old Friends.

Meand. But one Night's Lodging? ay, twenty.

Pont. You may thank me for it.

Meand. O, yes: But I thank my Stars, and her good Nature: For no sooner had she seen me, the Idol of her Soul so near her, than the Ardence of my burning Lips and twining Arms around her (a Circle that soon conjured up a strange bewitching *Demon* that hush'd all other interposing Powers) so totally enchanted all the Reason and Resolution about her, that she had scarce a Hand, a Look, a Breath, or a Murmur to resist me; whilst the uncheck'd Riffer play'd the lawless Rioter, and made the yielding Sacrifice all his own.

Pont. O brave *Meander*! But what past betwixt you and my Niece that Night, after the Queen was gone?

Meand. Why, she slept in my Arms; I hope there was no ill in that.

Pont. She is with Child by you.

Meand. What if she be? the *Cardinal* is able to keep it.

Pont. Is that all? will you not marry her? I think she is only fit for you now.

Meand. If once I kiss, farewell Marriage: The Queen is enough for me.

Pont. Is that your Conscience?

Meand. A Church-States Man speak of Conscience! *Pont.* And why not?

Meand. O brave, a *Cardinal's* Conscience! one may rowl a Wheelbarrow backwards in't.

Pont. I have done very well, to bring up a Bird to pick out my own Eyes.

Meand. As you bred me, so you have me: You taught me that Confidence, which

which I could never have had ; and now I'm become a greater Favourite than your self, and value neither you nor your Niece.

Licofa. O cursed day, when first I saw thy Face,
No Shame before ; but now comes my Disgrace.
A Whore, a Whore, I did abhor like Hell ;
No loss like mine, since *Lucifer* did fall.
A Whore to such a mean-born Slave as thee,
So much below my Race and Pedegree.
I could have marry'd those whom thou wouldst serv'd ;
And yet no better than I have deserv'd.
My Uncle was your making, *Sir*, and I
Will find a way to make your Grandeur die.

Meand. Farewell.

[*Exit Meander.*]

Pont. Thy Blood shall pay thy Debt, cancel thy Score,
What made the Great, shall likewise make the poor.
Return, my Furies from *Orlinn's* Chase,
And to the Ax and Grave *Meander* trace:
My Wrath's not ended, tho it be begun,
But shall in a swift gliding Channel run.
Dark, still, and muddy, lest the Monster know,
That I'm, for base Ingratitude, his Foe.

Enter Stratonice, whilst Licofa conveyeth her self away privately.

Strat. How now, in a Passion, Cardinal ?

Pont. I have reason, *Madam*, to be in a Passion.

Strat. And what is your Reason ? *Pont.* 'Tis a Secret, *Madam*.

Strat. Let it rest so. But where is your Niece, *Licofa* ?

Pont. She was here, just now, *Madam*, but is gone I know not where.

Strat. I believe's she's gone, she's asham'd to show her Face, after what she's done.

Pont. My Niece carry's the greatest Burden of Misfortune, for she is with Child by *Meander*. She is ruin'd. But your Majesty has sav'd the King's Credit, and done the Nation an unspeakable Favour.

Strat. The Devil is in this *Meander* ; but you may thank your self for it. You were his first Promoter, and all this is long of you——*Licofa* with Child !—— misfortunate poor Wretch. The King and I had resolv'd that *Orlinus* should marry her, under the pain of our eternal Displeasure.

Pont. Now, *Madam*, I design she shall go to a Nunnery, and do Penance by a long Abstinence.

Strat. Then I must contrive to come off with *Orlinus* the best way I can. But see, Cardinal, what the gaining of your wicked End has brought with it. Look to it Church-man, look to it, and see there be that Mercy and forgiving Goodness in Heaven for the unhappy *Stratonice*, that your Religious Sophistry flatter'd me with. Have a care of my Soul, I charge you, for I have given my self away.

Pont. What your Majesty has done, is a Work of Charity; and the greatest that ever was done to an impotent King, and a poor Heirless Kingdom.

Enter Arnusius. *Strat.* How do's my Brother?

Arn. He is well, Madam.

Strat. Who is with him?

Arn. Only your Majesty's Gentleman-Usher, Monsieur *Meander*.

Strat. And what are they about?

Arn. They are private in your Brother's Closet.

Strat. That's well.

Arn. I came to know when your Eminence will be at leisure to speak with *Orlinus*.

Pont. I am ready to wait upon *Orlinus* at all times; but I suspect his Business with me is concerning my Niece, which is over, she intending, after her late great Affront, to run no more hazards of danger, but make choice of a single and solitary Life in a Nunnery.

Arn. I shall acquaint him with what your Eminence saith. [*Exit Arnusius.*]

Pont. I do not like that *Orlinus* and *Meander* should be shut up in a Closet: *Orlinus* is an insinuating Man, and may soon draw out of *Meander* that which I would not have the World to know for the Pope's Triple Crown, and my own Red Hat.

Strat. Heavens forbid; then I were ruin'd for ever.

Pont. Well; I'll pump him, and know the Design of the Closet.

Strat. Do; and let me know, and I will find an Antidote against Tale-telling. [*Exeunt.*]

The Scene Orlinus's Chamber. Enter Arnusius and Orlinus.

Orlin. Now, *Arnusius*, what says the Cardinal to my proposal of Marriage with his Niece?

Arn. He is much averse from it now, as you was when you box'd his Ears.

Orlin. Sure it is not so bad with him.

Arn. I assure you it is; for he gives you an absolute denial, under colour of sending her to a Nunnery.

Orlin. Doth Rome's proud Fop, the juggling Fiend of France,

Slight me, who strives his Priestship to advance?

Farewel his Niece; for she will never be

Courted again by such a Prince as me.

Arn. I can inform you more: The uncertain Report of the Queen's being with Child, is certainly true; for tho' she has conceal'd it all this time, she is now almost ready to lie in.

Orlin. Sure the Devil is not so great with her, as to make her self a Whore, my Brother a Cuckold, and put me by the Crown.

Arn. You have no need to doubt; but she is with Child; but all the doubt lies in whose it is.

Orlin. That curs'd vindictive Fury of the Cardinal has contriv'd this Mischief for the Affront I gave to him and his Niece.

Arn. I know nothing of that; but this Monsieur *Meander* and she are mighty familiar; and some talk as if they were too familiar. *Orl.* I shall find that out.

Enter

Enter Capo, Stratonice, big bellied, Meander, and Pontæus.

Capo. Brother, we are come to pay you a Visit.

Orlin. Your Majesties are heartily welcome; and I am glad, Brother, you have done that the whole Nation has so long wish'd for.

Capo. What's that?

Orlin. Got the Queen with Child.

Capo. Yes, Brother; but I have been a long while about it.

Strat. No matter; a thing well done, is soon done.

Orlin. You look, Madam, as if your Time were nigh.

Strat. So nigh, that I have not an hour to reckon on; neither dare I hazard to stay long from my Chamber.

Capo. Do not stay then, but go and wait for the good Hour.

Strat. I will

[Exeunt Stratonice and Meander.]

Orlin. Brother, there is great talking concerning this Birth before it be brought forth.

Capo. What talking?

Orlin. Some talk as is you had got help in begetting the Queen with Child.

Capo. Yes, so I did; for my Wife helped me.

Orlin. Brother, if you will have it so, it must be so.

Pont. Let not your Majesty take offence at your Brother's Discourse; for he intends only to make merry.

Capo. No, no, Cardinal; I know that.

Arn. The Queen's a more vertuous Lady than to give occasion of such a black, disgraceful, and undeserv'd Suspicion.

Pont. And especially when it brings along with it so high and heinous a Reflection and Disparagement on his Majesty.

Capo. I desire, Brother, that neither in jest nor earnest you talk to me of so impertinent a Subject, under the pain of my eternal Displeasure.

Orlin. Let it so rest, Brother; what is your Will I must submit to.

Enter Meander.

Capo. What good News now?

Meand. The Queen is in Labour.

Pont. I wish her a happy Delivery.

Arn. Pray Heavens she may.

Orlin. But we'll go and see how it fares with her.

Capo. Go then, without further delay.

Orlin. The Birth of a Royal Heir is of great weight.

[Exeunt Orlinus, Meander, and Arnusius.]

Capo. What meant my Brother by this impertinent Discourse, Cardinal?

Pont. Some Fop has been buzzing him in the ear with an idle Discourse, and now he casts up the Froth of a groundless Suspicion.

Capo. I would advise him to be more cautious both in his Words and Actions, lest he run himself headlong in an evitable Danger.

Pont. I cannot but highly commend your Majesty for your Patience, when he so far encroach'd on your Majesty's Honour and Manhood. But to speak without Guile or Dissimulation, your Brother is swell'd to that magnitude, that he seems to eclipse both your self and Queen, the two celestial Orbs that illuminate this flourishing Nation.

Capo. He shall not henceforth find me so patient.

Pont.

Pont. Your Majesty is to be commended, to be either King or no King.

Enter Orlinus and Meander, with a Midwife carrying the supposed Prince; convey'd by several Noblemen and Ladies, Jesuits, Monks, and Friars; with a Spirit in a white Surplice walking last.

Capo. What good News?

Midw. Good News for your Majesty and all your Subjects.

Pont. A Prince! a Prince!

Meand. Heavens be prais'd.

Capo. Come, let me see him.

Orlin. He's as like you, Brother, as a Cub is like a Lion's Whelp. I think, *Meander*, he favours you. Look and see, Cardinal.

Pont. No, no, (and please your Grace) he is like his own Father.

Capo. Forbear your airy and tempting Reflections; your jealous Fate is not fit to wear a Crown, tho' I had no Heir.

Orlin. No sure, Brother, you have one: I saw it come out, but the Devil knows how it came in.

Capo. Absent my Presence, and let me not see your face; 'till you learn a better Behaviour, and more Breeding.

Pont. I have my Wish; for now the Royal Heir Of France is born, and disperses to Air. *[Takes the Child in his Arms.]*

The groundless Hopes that once *Orlinus* had, Which all the Joys of France once smothered.

[The Spirit stoppeth him, and takes the Child after a daring manner, and speaketh thus:]

Spirit. But suffer me without offence to tell, That he will prove a Cocatrice of Hell.

He'll be a Man of Prey, and hope will bring His Triumphs, through his Subjects suffering;

Not only swelling France will he undo, But neighbouring Kings, and mighty Princes too.

He'll dip his Foot in Blood, and do the Work Of Apostates, and turn *Moss Christian Turk*.

Truce-breaking Brute, who with his Villainies Will tann the Earth, and spot the very Skies.

Unhappy France, the Basilisk that bred; His Birth's thy Bane, his Death will make thee glad.

He'll dote when he grows old, despise the Pope, And bring all Kings of Europe in his tope.

He'll hate all Men, and all Men will abhor him, No Monster such was ever born before him.

His Name will stink, his Memory will rot; His cruel Acts will never be forgot.

He's *Deo datus*; for from Heaven he's hurl'd, Like Lucifer, to plague the Lower World.

Live, live, young Serpent, 'till thou com'st to age, Hard-hearted still, and Pharaoh like in rage,

Till

'Till, like *D'elefian*, thou be forc'd to fly,
 Asham'd to live, and terrify'd to die.
 Avant then, *Viper*, tho' thy Life's but small;
 Thy pois'nous Eyes preface thy Father's Fall.

[*He giveth back the young Prince to the Midwife, and vanisheth, whereat all present are amaz'd.*]

Capo. Heavens! who's here?

Pont. A Devil! a Devil!

Arn. An Angel, an Angel.

Pont. Why did not he stay then?

Arn. Cardinal, you are not Company for White Angels; your Troop are of another Livery.

Pont. Be he Devil, be he Angel, I believe he will prove a true Prophet.

Capo. Heavens forbid: But be what he will, he has so frighted me, that I will stay no longer.

[*Exeunt omnes, in a hurry.*]

The Scene, Stratonice's Bed-Chamber.

Enter Stratonice, sola.

Strat. The Danger's past, my Abstinence is o'er,
 And grumbling *France* will taunt the King no more;
 He has an Heir now to his Royal Crown,
 A hopeful Spark, as any in the Town.

Enter Licosta, and falls down on her Knees, crying, before the Queen.

Licost. Great Madam, I must acknowledge my self too bold to intrude your Majesty's Presence, after such a vile Act of vindictive Impudence, which has justly ruin'd me in all respects. But your Majesty's Vertue and Innocence, guard you from all Stain, and danger of Disgrace; and what is past upon your Majesty's account, tends to a profitable End, and the infinite Advantage of all your Subjects. Now, dear Madam, since Fate is so much your Friend, and your Guardian Angels so protect you, be so kind, out of your Goodness and Candour, to pardon my Weakness, and receive me again into your Majesty's Favour; otherwise my Heart will break, my Spirits fail, and I shall be ready to put a period to my wretched Days.

Strat. My dear *Licosta*, 'till the Sun, at Noon,
 Give o'er to shine, and suddenly go down;

[*Stratonice raiseth her up, pulleth her in her Arms, & kisses her.*]

'Till Fishes live in Woods, and Bears at Sea,
 My constant Love shall ne'er depart from thee.
 I pardon thee what ever thou hast done,
 And love thee now as when it was begun.
 Forbear, forbear, thy Loss is more than mine;
 Yet if I live I'll make thy Vertues shine.

Enter

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Enter Pontæus in haste, with an angry Countenance.

Pont. O Misfortune!

Strat. What's the matter now, Cardinal? You seem to be troubled in Mind.

Pont. We are all ruin'd and undone.

Strat. How so?

Pont. O this unhappy *Meander*, that ever I saw the Face of him!

Strat. What is the matter, Cardinal?

Pont. I cannot speak. O this *Meander*! this unhappy *Meander*! We are all betray'd.

Strat. Prithee speak out.

Pont. He has promis'd to discover to *Orlinus* the whole Intrigue of the young Prince.

Strat. How do you know?

Pont. I had some information of it from a certain hand. But *Arnusius* knows the whole proceedings, yet will not tell me one tittle.

Strat. O cursed Wretch! O ungrateful Monster! I'll be reveng'd.

Enter Arnusius.

Strat. Whence are you come, *Arnusius*?

Arn. From *Orlinus*, Madam, to enquire for your Welfare.

Strat. I'm in the way of recovery. But who is with my Brother?

Arn. None but Monsieur *Meander*.

Strat. They are soon become acquainted.

Pont. Ay, too soon to contrive Mischief.

Strat. And what are they about?

Arn. They are serious in private.

Strat. But do you know what they are about?

Arn. Not I, Madam.

Strat. Do not deny it; for I know you do: And if you will not tell me, it shall be the worse for you; but if you will, there's nothing in *France* shall be too good for you.

Arn. I would willingly serve your Majesty, but am quite ignorant of what you speak.

Pont. Did you ever hear *Orlinus* speak disgracefully of the Birth of the young Prince?

Strat. Speak the truth; for if ever I find out that you hear and conceal so deep a Treason, you shall be judged as a Traitor, and receive Justice accordingly.

Arn. Madam, if you will vow and promise never to discover what I say, but prosecute your Design in another Channel, I'll tell you all I know.

Strat. I do vow and promise, and will reward you to your Mind.

Arn. *Meander* has promis'd to put *Orlinus* in a fair way to be King; to discover the whole Intrigue of the Young Prince, and prove that he is no lawful Heir to the *French* Crown; and, for reward, he has bound himself by Oath to make him King of *Navarr*.

Strat.

Strat. Here are fine Doings: But be sure, *Arnusius*, you speak nothing; and do not stay; but go back, and present my Respects to my Brother; and take an opportunity to tell *Meander* that I would speak with him.

[Exit *Arnusius*.]

Pont. What course, Madam, do you intend to steer in this prodigious Scene?

Strat. I intend to take the nearest cut for my own Security.

Pont. What is that, Madam?

Strat. Cut off the Rogue's Head.

Pont. There can be no sure Remedy found out so long as he is alive; and if a speedy course be not taken, the whole Kingdom of *France* is ruin'd; and we are undone if once he discover his Mind to *Orlinus*.

Strat. If he has not done it already, I'll do my best to secure his discovering for the future.

Pont. What Measures must be taken?

Strat. You know, Cardinal, you have been the First Mover in this ill-look'd Business; therefore I beseech you to bend your Wits for our Security, since your Credit and undoing lie at the Stake, no less than mine.

Pont. What do you advise me to, Madam?

Strat. You must arraign him for High-Treason; and sweeten him with the Assurance of my Favour, and that he is in no danger of losing his Life; but that he is brought to a Tryal, to effectuate some Design of State-Policy, and compose some dangerous Animosities of envious and ambitious Men; lest in spite he reveal my eternal Disgrace.

Pont. Truly, Madam, if it be as *Arnusius* says (as I am apt to believe it is) he is guilty of the highest of Treasons; and in shewing Mercy to him, you murder your self.

Strat. I know it; and he shall never enjoy my Favour again. His Crime is unpardonable; and nothing can expiate his Guilt, but his Heart's Blood and last Breath.

[Enter *Meander*.] *Strat.* O, your Majesty's welcome.

Meand. And why your Majesty, Madam?

Strat. I hear you have got the Kingdom of *Navarr* from your Friend *Orlinus*, for discovering to him some secret Intrigue of State Policy.

Meand. Truly, Madam, your Informer is mistaken.

Strat. He is not mistaken, he will say it to your Face. Therefore I advise you to be ingenuous, to tell the Truth, and acknowledge your Error; if not, it shall be the worse for you.

Pont. The Wisdom of Men may be overseen, and speak a rash Word, which may repent him afterwards, yet not be guilty of any Capital Crime; therefore, Monsieur *Meander*, I earnestly request, and humbly beg you to speak the Truth, for the Queen's Satisfaction, especially knowing what Favour and Respect hath for you.

Meand.

The Royal Cuckold: Or,

Meand. To be real then; and acknowledge my Error: It is as your Informer says; And I have promised to give *Orlinus* an account of the Pedigree of the young Prince.

Strat. It was very unkindly done; but you know that you are the Idol of my Soul; and so from thence you take the liberty of doing what you please; but I request you, *Meander*, proceed no farther to ruin my Reputation, in expectation of that which you can never enjoy.

Meand. Madam, I'm wounded at the very Heart, that I should be so much overseen, or rather enchanted by the sugar'd Breath of that insinuating Serpent, *Orlinus*, as once to entertain a thought of being guilty of so black and monstrous a Crime: But I'll rather die than proceed any farther.

Strat. Be sure you keep no Correspondence with him; for if ever you do, and hear of it, I shall never be reconciled with you again: I shall hate you as much as ever I lov'd you.

Meand. It shall be so, Madam, and I heartily beg your Pardon for what is already past. [Exit Meander.]

Strat. Perfidious Wretch, Confounder of my Fate, My Blot, my Shame, my Ruin, and Disgrace.

Ponteus go, go soon, now while it's time, Cut off his Head to expiate his Crime.

Pont. Madam, I'll go, in haste, at your Command, And make the Traitor feel my weighty Hand. [Exit.]

The SCENE A place of Execution. [Enter Arnulfus and Licostia.]

Arn. How comes *Meander* off with the Queen?

Licost. We shall see by and by. *Arn.* But pray, Madam, let me know.

Licost. This is the last day of his Life. *Arn.* Is he to die to Day?

Licost. I hope to see him shorter by the Head to Day.

Arn. He has been an ambitious and peridious Man, but I'm heartily sorry for him.

Licost. Sorry! for a Villain, a Varlet, a Rogue, that had all that the Court could afford, in respect of Delight, Riches, and Honour, and strove to ruin for ever those who were his Promoters. Hell take such Impostors; they are not worthy to live.

Arn. And is it certain that he is to die this day?

Licost. Yes; but 'tis more than he knows.

Arn. 'Tis a pity to lewd a Liver should not know his Doom.

Licost. No pity, let him die, and double die; With his Hearts-Blood I'll write his Elegy.

I'll treat my Soul, and Feast my Appetite, With Blood and Wounds, in Vengeance take Delight. His Body bury'd in some Dunghill lie. All his Vitals into Vapours flie.

Enter Meander guarded, with Father Pedro; the Executioner following with an Axe.
Meand. What need I thus be gazed at, as if I were some Traitor or Villain, And

And were brought hereto die for some reeking Crime?

Pedr. Ay, and so you are like, as I can understand; therefore pray think on another World; make Friends in Purgatory.

Meand. Tell your deluding Fables to some ignorant Fop like your self; for I shall sup this Night with the Queen.

Enter Messenger, and speaks to Meander aside.

Mess. Sir, the Cardinal will send your Pardon within this quarter of an Hour; therefore desires you not to be afraid of the Circumstances you are under.

Meand. go, and desire him to make haste.

Pedr. If you'll confess, I'll cleanse your Soul from Sin;
That Saints in Paradise may take you in.

Mess. The Queen commands his Head to be cut off with all speed.

He whispers the Captain of the Guards, and Exit.

Capt. Pray, Sir, make haste, we have no time to delay; be pleas'd to lay down your Head, and receive the stroke of Justice.

Meand. Sure it is not so bad with you.

Capt. Ay, but it is with you; and you shall and must; for it is the Queen's Command.

Meand. Is it so?

Curse on the Queen: Is this my Pardon sent?

Am I thus serv'd in Jest, that did prevent

The Kingdom's Contest for a Royal Heir;

And have not time the Truth now to declare?

[Pedro and the Captain of the Guards push Meander towards the Execution Block.]

Pedr. Cut off his Head, cut off his Head.

Licost. 'Tis time the Villain should be dead.

[Some of the Guards pluck him down to the Block.]

Meand. Curse on Promotion, Honour and Ambition.

Once I was high, now in a low Condition.

[His Head on the Block.]

[The Executioner cuts off his Head, whilst Licostia pullets it up in her Hand, beating it on the Jefe, and thrusting her Bodkin through his Tongue.]

Licost. O Blessed Sacrifice, I'll treat this Tongue,
That of my Shame in open Triumph Sings:
Dissembling Lips that oft have kiss'd my Mouth,
Betray'd my Heart but never spoke the Truth.
I'm glad to see the Stain of Mortals fall,
The Kingdom's Curse, O cruel Canniba!
So may all false deceitful Lovers be
Cast down by Fate, and die in Infamy.

[Exit]

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